C.C.Beck on Creating Comic Book Characters
"Who Owns Original Art?," by Steve Ditko

INSIDE COMICS

VOLUME 1 NUMBER 2
SUMMER 1974
$1

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INSIDE COMICS

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Cover: C.C. Beck unveils his brand new character, DAR THE INVINCIBLE. Based loosely on D'Artagnan of The Three Musketeers, DAR is Beck's vehicle for commenting on contemporary comic book character development. Copyright © 1974 by C.C. Beck.

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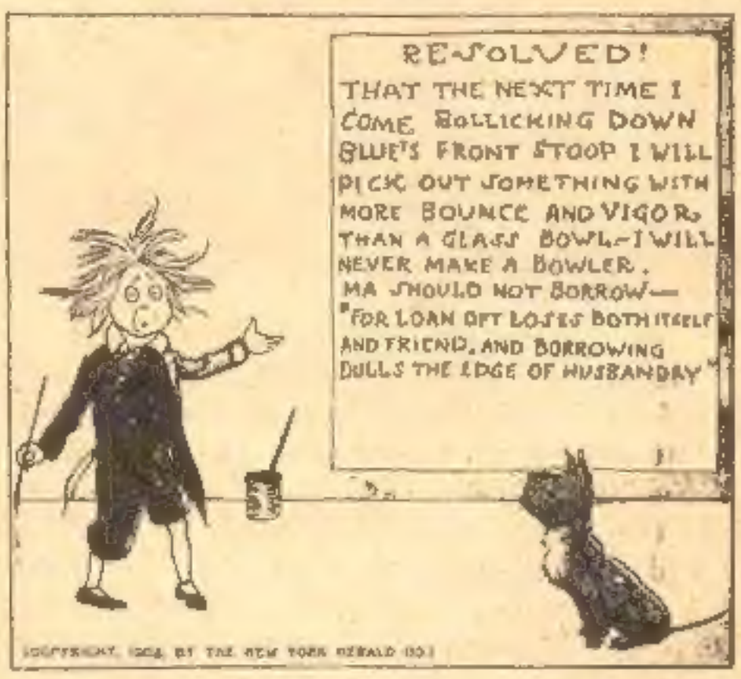
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LETTERS

Crumb—Is He?

To the editor...

Robert Crumb, who is quite literally that, has no sense of honor or duty to his fans. Indicating that the greatest satisfaction he ever had was turning down **PLAYBOY**'s offer is something like taking elaborate trouble denying believing in God. I guess **PLAYBOY** exists as much in his consciousness (as something to master) as his large-hipped-Jewish-broads from the Village.

At any rate, I love Crumb and I enjoyed seeing that article though it was not true that I was enraged. I never expected him to take the offer and did it out of tokenism because I admire his work so much.

Michelle Urry
New York City
March 29, 1974

Ms. Urry is cartoon editor of PLAYBOY magazine.

More Crumb Comments

To the editor...

HAROLD HEDD #2 is not a formula comic anymore than **NARD 'N' PAT** or Shelton's **FREAK BROTHERS**. It didn't have a fraction of the sex and violence one finds in the books of Crumb. As for the audience being different than Crumb's, Bay Area dealers disagree. Those who read Crumb and Shelton read Holmes and Green and the others as well.

Clay Geerdes
Berkeley, California
March 2, 1974

Clay Geerdes is editor and publisher of COMIX WORLD.

We certainly wouldn't attempt to answer for Crumb's characterization of HAROLD HEDD #2 as a formula book, but we would argue with your comment that the audience for Crumb and Shelton is the same as the audience for Holmes and Green and others. While Bay Area readers might read everything, once you leave the highly saturated underground capital, tastes differ. Many people read strictly Crumb, others only Shelton and several people we know simply despise undergrounds but can identify with Justin Green's BINKY BROWN MEETS THE HOLY VIRGIN MARY.

To the editor...

Re: the R. Crumb interview in your first issue: I thought it was shallow and sketchy.

Crumb is not the King of the Undergrounds. No one wants him to be, most of all himself. His work is not intrinsically better than any other ug cartoonist. Some is very good, some is crummy. There are many others of equal skill and inspiration. His forte is the amount of work he has produced and his ability to work quickly.

I think the author of the piece did little research into Crumb's background before the interview. An opportunity to talk to such a prolific and lucid artist could be a terrific insight into his personality and motivations. But he emerges instead as a comic book character, two-dimensional and flat. If there were any new insights into Crumb or his work, I didn't see them.

Patrick Rosenkranz
Estacada, Oregon
March 17, 1974

Patrick Rosenkranz is the author of two books, COMIX COUNTDOWN and KOMIX KOUNTERMEDIA.

Notes from the Brillo Factory

To the editor...

Jim Steranko doesn't remember my asking him for space in his magazine in which to answer his editorial?

The incident happened in my office at National. Jim had just gotten off a zinger—something like "Is that your hair or is it an explosion in a Brillo factory?"—and I recall thinking that jokes about my hair are approximately as funny as jokes about Jim's lack of potential as a basketball center, but I said nothing because I was busy asking for the aforementioned space.

Ah, well, we all have our defense mechanisms. As well as our memory lapses.

Denny O'Neil
New York City
February 26, 1974

Denny O'Neil is a writer and editor for National Periodical Publications.

Superheist!

To the editor...

INSIDE COMICS seems to be a more complete and adult publication than most on the subject. The great original art heist article was most interesting. A good friend has been a recent victim of a similar thing and, for that matter, so have I. The first three months of **BROOM-HILDA**, excepting the first week, also "disappeared" plus other isolated strips along the line.

The syndicate vaults leak like old diapers. I have yelled as have others and the syndicate promises better security. Ho hum.

Russell Myers
Santa Barbara, California
March 7, 1974

Russell Myers is the writer/artist/creator of BROOM-HILDA, nationally syndicated by the Chicago Tribune-New York News syndicate.

To the editor...

Joe Brancatelli's article on the theft of original artwork at National stands as perhaps the finest piece of fannish journalism ever written. It was concise, interesting, entertaining, and perhaps most importantly, a solid reporting job on a difficult situation.

It now becomes clear why several of the comic bigwigs don't like Joe Brancatelli: they're scared shit he might actually show them for what they are. It seems to me that only the industry moguls with something to hide need fear Brancatelli. As **VARIETY**, that tout sheet of tout sheets might say, "Kudos, Kudos, Kudos."

James Ireland
Chicago, Illinois
April 3, 1974

Joe Brancatelli replies: Wait until I unveil my white knight suit of armor and flag.

BUNK Lives!

To the editor...

Reference an item in **INSIDE COMICS #1**. The Vast Whizzbang Organization is proud and pleased to

present you with a copy of **BUNK**. Needless to say, Mr. Kurtzman had nothing to do with it.

Captain George Henderson
Toronto, Ontario
February 15, 1974

George Henderson is the owner and guiding light behind Canada's Vast Whizzbang Organization. He is also a comics writer.

The copy of BUNK graciously given the INSIDE COMICS staff was published in October, 1932 by Clayton Magazines of New York City. The magazine apparently was one of the last magazines to utilize the multi-line caption cartoon—a cartoon forever antiquated by Peter Arno and Harold Ross' NEW YORKER magazine. Also in this issue are several early Reamer Keller cartoons. Bill Holman, writer/artist of SMOKEY STOVER, is also represented several times.

Our thanks to the Captain for de-BUNKing the rumor.

The ACBA Aftermath

To the editor...

I will have to thank Bruce Mittelman when I next see him. Really nice photo of me—I look about 16, which pleases me immensely.

Seriously though, I guess any comment on the ACBA article will have

to come from ACBA itself rather than me, so I will "abstain." Doug Murray is a fine writer and I'll have to corner him on some of the points he made at the next meeting (no violence intended).

Flo Steinberg
New York City
February 22, 1974

Flo Steinberg is a member of the ACBA Board of Governors and works for the Warren Publishing Company.

To the editor...

ACBA is, and probably always will be, one of the most incredibly inept organizations ever formed. Perhaps it is reflective of the people who man the organization. The vast majority of membership seem to fear the publishers —or have so little faith in their own talent that they are frightened away by often needed controversy.

It's also a shame that Neal Adams doesn't take an even more aggressive position than he does as president. He's one of the few people who can even recognize the industry's problems.

With Neal Adams, ACBA is slowly fading into the sunset. Without him, the organization will probably be turned into a publishers' weapon against the individual professional comic worker.

Which is Groucho Marxian enough for anyone.

Fred Waring
New Haven, Connecticut
March 1, 1974

To the editor...

Some of your material—such as your article on ACBA—displayed considerable naivete for a magazine "inside" comics. Considering the structure of the industry, could it be anything other than it is? The best ACBA can do is add a veneer of respectability to a sweat-shop industry.

Brian Earl Brown
Mishawaka, Indiana
April 1, 1974

Adams and Newsprint

To the editor...

Praise to Neal Adams for picking the newsprint shortage to go on strike against National. Now, with the cutback in production, Adams won't be in competition with other artists who want work. I doubt National will miss him much.

I had heard he couldn't be trusted to meet a deadline (he never made one at Marvel while I was there) and his work on Deadman and **GREEN LANTERN/ GREEN ARROW** didn't keep those titles alive (Marvel's **X-MEN** also died with Adams on the art). My personal opinion of Adams is that he is one of the few really great illustrators, but a man who accepts work from an editor agrees, by the nature of his field, to meet a given deadline. When he fails to deliver, he has broken his word and broken an unwritten contract. As much as I admire Adams' art, if I were an editor in the position of paying artists to produce work, I would not hire Adams on a bet.

James P. Petty
Corinth, Mississippi
February 24, 1974

James P. Petty is editor of CRITTER magazine.

This Letter Isn't to Us

[Editor's note]—After reading Larry Trepel's letter in this magazine's first issue, James Warren, president and publisher of the Warren Publishing Company, wrote this letter. He was kind enough to send us a copy for publication here.

Dear Larry:

After reading your letter in the Spring 1974 issue of **INSIDE COMICS** I asked Joe Brancatelli for your address, so that I might write to you.

Larry, I'm the first to agree that Joe's vignette, "The Convention Nobody Saw," was only too true. It was easy for anyone to observe the unhappy elements, and there were many at this convention—or for that matter, any large convention. Joe has the talent to be able to put these thoughts in writing in a way that says truth, even though most of us (me included) at times don't want to see truth.

However, I was moved to the point where I felt I wanted to send you a few words of, call it, encouragement. In any given affair, whether it be the U.S. Army winning World War II, or 6,000 comic fans attending the N.Y. Comicon, I'm afraid we're going to have a certain percentage of those "ugly, depressing, pathetic scenes." These scenes include the so-called "money-grabbers," and the opportunists for profit or ego in whatever form.

But, when I was 15, I had no place to go, and very few people to relate to when I wanted to indulge in my favorite pastime of talking about comics. Yes, there were always two or three guys in school, or in the neighborhood, with whom I could have a sporadic talk session on comics. I even had a pen pal in Seattle, Washington. I would have given anything to be able to come to a convention or conclave of a dozen (let alone a few thousand) people like yourself. Yet, these conclaves didn't exist back in 1945.

Here in the seventies we do have conclaves—despite the fact that, say 25 per cer of said conclaves represents the typ e of unhappiness you discussed in your letter. The point is: even if the 25 per cent becomes 75 per cent, I think the 25 per cent **remaining** is probably worth the 75 per cent of the "unhappy" parts. Of course, Larry, this is one man's opinion, but it works for me.

Rather than have you write off all the conventions as a bunch of money-grabbing, no-good guys, I would hope that you'd try to look for the gems that do exist for people like yourself.

Here's a gem: Sit down and have a cola with me the next convention you can attend in New York (I'll be at the Lunacon), and I guarantee to give you an entertaining half-hour of personal comments and observations re the comic and fan scene. This won't change your life, but at least I'll come away from it with **your** autograph in **my** program book.

Let me hear from you!

Sincerely,
James Warren
New York City
April 5, 1974

Financing INSIDE COMICS

To the editor...

Since you and your staff have made such an issue of honesty in publishing, don't you think you owe it to your readers to report on how **INSIDE COMICS** is financed. Who owns the magazine? Who has a piece of it?

Perhaps more specifically, does any of the editorial staff have a financial interest in the magazine?

H. Stevens
Los Angeles, California
March 7, 1974

Joe Brancatelli replies: Your point is a good one, deserving of an answer. So here it is:

INSIDE COMICS is owned totally—100 per cent—by The Galaxy News Service, Inc. Galaxy News Service is owned totally by the publishers of this magazine, Les Waldstein and Larry Brill.

No one on the editorial staff—myself included—have any stock or other financial interest in the magazine. We are all on salary and are subject to dismissal at any time. Contrary to popular belief, by the way, Galaxy News Service did not pay to obtain the name INSIDE COMICS. I gave it to them for nothing—mainly because I wanted to see them publish the magazine.

Also contrary to popular belief, Galaxy News did not publish the two fanzine versions of INSIDE COMIX magazine. Yours truly, all by my lonesome, financed the magazine (which our current Production Chief, Ron Bookstaff, typeset), and I still retain all the copyrights.

As for my personal salary, the two issues of INSIDE COMICS I have edited for Galaxy News Service has netted me considerably less than $1000. And, since this issue is my last as editor, my control of the magazine's editorial content also ends with this issue.

I believe that covers everything.

INSIDE COMICS accepts letters on anything related to the comic art field. Address all mail to: INSIDE COMICS Letters, 11 West 17th Street, New York, New York 10011.

Corrections

Like any new publication, we had our share of typographical errors in the first issue. In our R. Crumb interview, three names were spelt incorrectly. As we're sure you know, it isn't "Ted Richard" but Ted Richards; Dave Moriaty mysteriously became "Dave Moriarity"; and Ralph Bakshi somehow became "Ralph Bashki."

In our listing of stolen artwork for the Superheist article, the Kirby artwork stolen was from **JIMMY OLSEN #137** and not **#140** as was erroniously set in type. And, as we are sure you know, the "Tales of Krypton" stories are from **SUPERMAN** and not **ACTION** comics.

Ron Bookstaff, our man in charge of catching mistakes like that, has been sufficiently whipped and has vowed never to let it happen again.

THE COMIC REPORT

THE PANIC AT CRAZY

Well, all you rabid EC fans, **PANIC** is now in reprint. But not exactly the way you think.

It seems that the fourth issue of Marvel's **MAD**-imitation, **CRAZY**, ran a page of classified advertising. Phony classified advertising, ostensibly written by one Kenneth Kaasen.

Only Kenneth Kaasen happened to steal the page of phony classified from **PANIC #6**, which originally ran the classifieds in a parody of **POPULAR MECHANICS** magazine they did in 1955.

Of the 28 classified and "information" blurbs run on the **CRAZY #4** page, at least 20 of them were directly stolen from the **PANIC #6** parody. Most of them came directly off the old **PANIC** classified page, while a few others were lifted from other pages of the same satire on **POPULAR MECHANICS**.

And lest you think our imagination is running rampant, here are two of the more blatant examples:

From **PANIC #6**:

"MOUSTACHE Wax, in 100 pound barrels. Cheap. You can never tell when someone will call you up at 2 A.M. some morning and ask, 'Got any Moustache Wax?' Be prepared. $1.00 per barrel, you pay postage. Useless Products Sales Corp., Nome Alaska."

Kaasen did a slight rewrite and it appeared like this in **CRAZY #4**:

"MOUSTACHE WAX in 200 pound barrels. $3.95. Cheap. You can never tell when someone will call you up at 2 a.m. some morning and ask: 'Got any moustache wax?' Be prepared! Useless Products Sales Corp., Box 19."

From **PANIC #6**:

"FOOL your friends. Surplus Electric Chair. Really works. Interesting item to liven up a dull party. This'll kill 'em. Can be upholstered to look like ordinary furniture. Supply limited. Prison Products Surplus Corp., Box 210V, Alcatraz, Va."

After another minor rewrite, **CRAZY #4** gave us:

"FOOL your friends. Surplus electric chairs. Really works. Interesting item to liven up a dull party. This'll kill 'em. Can be upholstered to look like ordinary furniture. Complete Price $625. Supply limited. Write our 'hot-seats' dept. for more information. Useless etc."

When Marvel big-wigs learned about the obvious plagiarism, **CRAZY** editor Marv Wolfman immediately wrote a long, apologetic letter to Bill Gaines, who published **PANIC**.

One **MAD** source we talked to said that Gaines "wasn't too happy about the whole thing, especially since it just happened to appear in the competition's magazine."

He said that Gaines had referred the matter to **MAD**'s lawyer, Jack Albert, and that Albert would formulate **MAD**'s eventual course of action. □

SUPERFRAUD!

Los Angeles—The **NATIONAL ENQUIRER** pounced on the story first. The tabloid said 60-year-old Mayo Kaan, who owns a health club in Winthrop, Mass., was the original model for Superman. According to Kaan, he posed for Superman creators Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster when they discovered him in a Boston gym in 1936.

Kaan also claimed that he appeared in two Superman movies, was a personal friend of TV Superman George Reeves, and even made personal appearances as The Man of Steel in the early forties. A local New York television news program quoted Kaan as saying he had lost 80 pounds in recent months and "wanted his old job back."

The Associated Press grabbed the story as well; their wirephoto service moved a picture of Kaan today—and how he appeared as 1936's "Superman." The photo ran in several local papers, including **THE LOS ANGELES TIMES**; several television and radio outlets also used the material.

The NBC syndicated **TOMORROW** program flew Kaan to Los Angeles and he was slated to appear on the March 21st edition about muscle men. He was also scheduled to appear on several local Los Angeles programs, the independently syndicated **I'VE GOT A SECRET** game show and Gary Owens' KMPC radio show.

But before Kaan could make any of those appearances, his story fell apart. A local fan, realizing that Siegal and Shuster were from Cleveland and not Boston, had his doubts about Kaan's claim. Not to mention that if Kaan really appeared in Superman movies, how come no film critic ever mentioned him? And how come Kirk Alyn is generally recognized as the first screen Superman?

The fan alerted Jerry Siegel, who promptly telephoned the **TOMORROW** staff. Siegel told them that he had never heard of Mayo Kaan—and that neither he nor Shuster had ever been in Boston!

As a result of further NBC research, Kaan was quickly shipped home to Winthrop and wasn't a part of the muscle man program when it was aired. Owens' radio show also cancelled out, as did **I'VE GOT A SECRET**.

However, Los Angeles television station KHJ ran a **WHAT'S MY LINE?** program on which Kaan did appear. He ran some film clips of himself as "Superman," supposedly filmed in 1937—a year before the character ever appeared in **ACTION #1**. The films were fuzzy and seemed photographed by an amateur.

Mayo Kaan is presumably still in Winthrop, Mass., 80 pounds lighter and a lot of publicity later.

—**Mark Evanier**

PIN-UP HANG-UPS

Jim Steranko's "Supergirls" calendar so enraged one comic fan, he wrote to both National and Marvel to complain—his complaint being that Steranko had "infringed" on the copyrights of both companies.

The calendar contains 12 superheroine types posed and illustrated in the 1940's pin-up style—apparently intended to titilate any comic fan too young to go out and buy **PLAYBOY** or **PENTHOUSE**.

In any case, the fan wrote to both National Publisher Carmine Infantino and Marvel Publisher Stan Lee and demanded that they stop Steranko's "infringement".

We obtained a copy of the letter National Vice President Bernard Kashdan wrote to the fan. Dated February 20th, Kashdan said he had "written Steranko asking for further information. We have had dealings with him over the years, and we have always worked together amicably.

"I am sure he will avoid infringing on our rights," the letter continued, "especially now that

you have alerted us."

Marvel had Stan Lee's secretary, Trudi Lee, dispatch a note saying they would look into the situation.

But a spokesman for Steranko said that they hadn't been contacted—at least not as late as mid-April.

"I can't see why they'd bust our chops," he said. "Not only didn't Steranko do anything wrong, even if he did, they wouldn't bother."

We checked back with National and a spokesman said that they hadn't bothered to look into it yet and didn't have plans to do so. □

BAILING OUT BAILS

Jerry Bails, who created fandom as we know it, founded **ALTER EGO** with Roy Thomas, invented the term "panelologist" and about a dozen other things we can think of, is looking for help to complete his **WHO'S WHO IN AMERICAN COMIC BOOKS**.

As you may know, the first volume of **WHO'S WHO** appeared several months ago and contained entries for the letters "A" through "F." Now Bails is searching for more information to fill holes in his research. He needs the current home address or current working address for the following comic professionals: Emil Gershwin, Harry Anderson, Bernard Bailey, Chuck Cuidera, Ernie Hart, Munson Paddock, Bert Whitman, Ed Dobrodka, John Sikela, Bob Fujitani, David Gantz, Chad Grothkopf, S.M. Iger, Bob McCarty, Ruben Moreira, Carl Pfeufer, Harry Sahle, Gustav Schrotter, Charles Paris, Jack Kamen, Dick Sprang, Tarpe Mills, Fred Kida, Al Plastino, Mo Gollub, Marvin Stein, Wm. H. Cook, John Mahon, Joe Hardie, Mrs. Grace Jacquet, Richard M. Hughes, Dan Zolnerowich, Louis Zansky, Ray Willner, Witmer Williams, Jim O. Thompson, Bud Thompson, Ben Thompson, John Spranger, Al Wenzel, Vince Sullivan, Paul Gustavson.

If you have information about any of these people, please contact Jerry at: 487 Lakewood, Detroit, Mich. 48215. □

MIGHTY MARVEL'S MAIL ORDER MISHAPS

A problem of gargantuan size is looming at Marvel's fan club, Friends Of Ol' Marvel (FOOM), and no one knows how to handle it—or even who is going to do the handling.

The story is as follows: Orders placed for FOOM material between April and October of last year were being stored at Marvel's New York offices for several months instead of being shipped to Jim Steranko's Supergraphics, the organization hired to handle the FOOM marketing.

No one seems to know what was done with the envelopes while they were at 575 Madison Avenue. Some might have been opened, some might have been unopened. No one knows if the payment was taken out or whether checks were cashed, either. In short, there simply weren't any records being kept on all the mail that was piling up.

Finally, after the number of orders reached several thousand, they were bundled and shipped in bulk to Steranko in Pennsylvania. Most of them never reached Supergraphics, however. Some arrived at a mailing dock miles away, but the bulk of the orders simply disappeared.

(To complicate matters even further, as **INSIDE COMICS** reported last issue, Steranko no longer heads FOOM.)

And since there were no records kept, no one knows who ordered what and when they ordered it.

Which means there are several thousand customers who simply haven't gotten their merchandise—and Marvel doesn't know who or where they are.

INSIDE COMICS editor Joe Brancatelli spoke to the new **FOOM** magazine editor, Tony Isabella, and he said he was aware of the problem but "was trying to keep out of the business side of the club." He said he didn't know who would be appointed to straighten out the mess, or even if someone would be appointed in the near future.

Which is where the situation now stands. One Marvel source we spoke to said that possible solutions had been "kicked around," but the matter was terribly compounded by the lack of records. Marvel, he said, simply doesn't know what's going on.

Which, as the late Billy De Wolfe might say, is "Tacky, Tacky, Tacky."

—Henry Anton

At left: Kung Phooey; top right: The NEW ADVENTURES OF GILLIGAN; and, a scene from THOSE ARE THE DAYS.

THE KIDVID SEASON

Lead by a live action and animated version of Captain Marvel, all three television networks recently announced their Saturday and Sunday morning children's programming slate for the 1974-1975 season.

Perhaps the most novel of the new shows will be Filmation Enterprises' 30-minute **SHAZAM!**, which is expected to be a live action program with animated special effects. Although no actors have been chosen, and no stories or plots finished, the program appears on CBS' Saturday morning schedule for 10:30 airing.

The CBS network also announced the following new cartoon shows: **PARTRIDGE FAMILY 2200 AD** (9:30, Saturday) and **VALLEY OF THE DINOSAURS** (10:00, Saturday), both produced by Hanna-Barbara; and the **U.S. OF ARCHIE** (12:00, Saturday), also from Filmation. A half-hour version of last season's **SCOOBY DOO**, entitled **SCOOBY DOO, WHERE ARE YOU?**, will air at 8:30 on Saturday.

Five CBS cartoon programs will be dropped from the CBS schedule: **HAIR BEAR BUNCH; SABBRINA, THE TEENAGE WITCH; JOSIE AND THE PUSSYCATS; PEBBLES AND BAMM-BAMM;** and **AMAZING CHAN AND THE CHAN CLAN.**

Over at ABC, five cartoon programs have been killed and four new ones added. Among the new shows are: **THE NEW ADVENTURES OF GILLIGAN** (9:30, Saturday), a spin-off of the old **GILLIGAN'S ISLAND** series; **KUNG PHOOEY** (9:00, Saturday); **DEVLIN** (10:00 Saturday); and **THOSE ARE THE DAYS** (12:00, Saturday).

The cancelled animated programs are: **BRADY KIDS; MISSION: MAGIC; KID POWER;** and **THE OSMONDS.**

And at NBC, which started last season dead last in the Neilson ratings and finished the season in first place, the trekkies won one—**STAR TREK** was renewed and scheduled for 11:30 Saturday mornings. NBC dropped only two cartoons—**INCH HIGH PRIVATE EYE** and **BUTCH CASSIDY CARTOONS**—and added three: **THE CHOPPER BUNCH; RUN, JOE, RUN;** and **LAND OF THE LOST.** □

MARVEL'S CONAN WINS THIRD STRAIGHT

Conan the Barbarian, Marvel's sword and sorcery adaption of the Robert E. Howard character, won an unprecedented third straight Favorite Comic Book Character title in the 1973 Comic Art Fan Awards.

The character began in late 1970 and has been scripted by Marvel editor Roy Thomas since its inception.

The other winners included: Berni Wrightson (Favorite Pro Artist); Len Wein (Favorite Pro Writer); Roy Thomas (Favorite Pro Editor); **SWAMP THING** (Favorite Pro Comic Book); **MENOMONEE FALLS GAZETTE** (Favorite Non-Newsstand Comic Book); "Night of The Bat" from **SWAMP THING #7** (Favorite Comic Book Story); **THE COMIC READER** (Favorite Fanzine); Don and Maggie Thompson (Favorite Fan Writers); and Don Newton (Favorite Fan Artist).

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None of the second and third place finishers were announced and the vote totals were also unavailable at this writing.

Tony Isabella, the Marvel writer who assumed the awards' administrative duties this year from Don and Maggie Thompson, said that all the winners had large pluralities, except for Favorite Fan Artist. He said only several votes separated Newton from Richard Corben, who had beaten Newton the two years previous.

Roy Thomas' win was his second consecutive Comic Art Fan Award in that category; he was also the Favorite Pro Writer in the 1972 balloting.

The two fanzine winners had also won similar awards last year. Don and Maggie Thompson won their second consecutive award—and third in the last four years—as Favorite Fan Writers.

CONRAD THE COUNTERFEITER?

The plates and negatives of an editorial cartoon by Paul Conrad were taken from the **SALT LAKE CITY TRIBUNE** January 11th by the U.S. Secret Service after the paper ran the illustration. The cartoon, syndicated by The Los Angeles Times syndicate, showed three $1 bills with the writing "One Dollar Per Gallon" across the bottom and the caption "Administration's Gasoline Ration Stamps ..."

Anthony Sherman, bureau chief of the Salt Lake City Secret Service, said the seizure was "routine" and that no further action would be taken. There was "obviously" no intent or purpose to "defraud or counterfeit," he said.

A federal counterfeiting law forbids photographing or reproducing a facsimile of currency—unless the purpose is "newsworthy." No definition of newsworthy is given, however.

A spokesman for the **TRIBUNE** said that agents for the Secret Service were given the material voluntarily.

Question has arisen about the seizure's questionable legality, however. U.S. Attorney Stan Pitkin in Seattle, whose assistant brought the cartoon to the Secret Service's attention, said he thought the cartoon was "newsworthy, a political cartoon that obviously was a comment on the gas shortages."

But in Washington, a Secret Service spokesman said the cartoon "was a violation of the law," but that the agency "wasn't looking to make a big issue of this thing."

Conrad has won Pulitzer Prizes for his cartooning in 1964 and 1971.

SUSPENDED ANIMATION

"Th-th-th-th-at's All Folks" seems to be the common television network rejoinder to animators as the cartoon industry is being hit by one of its worst crises in recent history. The networks have curtailed their animated programming for the upcoming "kidvid" season, and animators face the possibility of long stretches of unemployment.

Lou Appel, business representative of the screen cartoonist's union, said that much of the problem has been caused by recent Federal Communications Commission (FCC) statements criticizing television cartoon violence.

He said that the networks were "highly concerned about and sensitive to actions of the pressure groups who loudly decry excessive violence in cartoon programming for children. Because of this, the networks are switching to live action series that are thought to be educational and instructive."

As a result of the pressure, Appel said, 50 per cent of the new Saturday morning programs are going to be live action. All this coming on the heels of the fantastic year animators had for the 1973 season, when close to 90 per cent of children's programming was cartoons.

Another factor contributing to the current animation drought is the high cost and low quality of limited animation cartoons. Appel said that most of the networks were telling him that it was cheaper to produce live action programs.

"When quiz or game shows comprise the programming, costs are absolutely minimal," Appel moaned.

One animator we spoke to has been out of work for a month already and said "the possibilities of getting work in the near future look lousy."

The animator laughed when informed that networks were killing cartoons due to their high cost. "They're right, of course, but even with the high costs, the animators are in terrible condition. We're getting starvation wages.

"It's gonna be a lousy year," he added redundantly. □

THE CASE OF THE MISSING TITLES

Those of you who subscribe to DynaPubs' **VINTAGE FUNNIES** may have been wondering what happened to the title logos of the **BUCK ROGERS, TARZAN, TERRY AND THE PIRATES** and **DICK TRACY** comic strips.

The **BUCK ROGERS** pages sometimes appear with the logo blanked out, and sometimes with the title "Adventures in the 25th Century"; the title logo for **TARZAN** is whited out, while **TERRY AND THE PIRATES** appears only as "Terry"; **DICK TRACY** sometimes says only "Dick" and often is blacked out entirely.

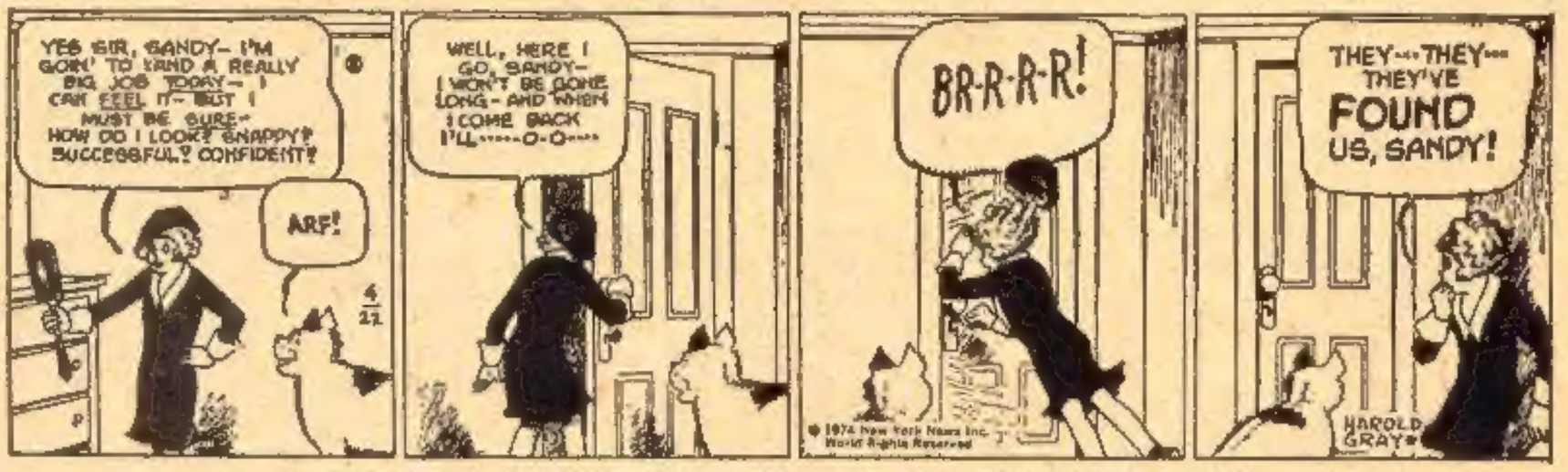
We talked to DynaPub Publisher Alan Light last March 29th and he told us that he had made a deal with **BUCK ROGERS'** syndicate not to use the name and to substitute "Adventures in the 25th Century." Neither Light nor the syndicate would reveal why the deal was made.

"I'd rather not say," snapped Light. Presumably, however, the arrangement was made so as not to infringe with any copyrights or territorial distribution rights.

Light also said the same deal had been made with the Chicago Tribune-New York News syndicate concerning **TERRY AND THE PIRATES**, and he similarly declined to divulge specifics.

As for **TARZAN**, however, the story is somewhat different. According to Light, while the **TARZAN** pages he runs are in the public domain—the copyrights having expired—the name "Tarzan" is trademarked by Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc. Therefore, he said, while he can run the strips, he cannot use the name without permission.

A spokesman for Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc. confirmed the story and suggested that they "still might try some kind of action" to prohibit Light from printing the strips. □


YES SIR, SANDY— I'M GOIN' TO LAND A REALLY BIG JOB TODAY— I CAN FEEL IT— BUT I MUST BE SURE— HOW DO I LOOK? SNAPPY? SUCCESSFUL? CONFIDENT?
ARF!
4/22
WELL, HERE I GO, SANDY— I WON'T BE GONE LONG— AND WHEN I COME BACK I'LL·····O-O····
BR-R-R-R!
THEY···THEY··· THEY'VE FOUND US, SANDY!
HAROLD GRAY

Above: The first reprinted Harold Gray strip from 1935. Below: David Lettick.

THE LAST OF LETTICK

Pity poor, 26-year-old David Lettick.

After less than three months as the artist of **LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE**, The Chicago Tribune-News Syndicate canned him, and on April 22 began reprinting 1935 Harold Gray strips.

Lettick had taken over the 50-year-old **ANNIE** early this past February from Vic Martin and Michael Fleisher. He had been brought in by the syndicate to revamp the strip and bring it closer to the Gray style. He was also the first man to get a by-line since creator Gray's death in 1968.

But apparently Lettick's work didn't appeal to the syndicate big-wigs after all. At the strip's height of popularity, over 500 newspapers handled the feature, but with Lettick at the helm the list of subscribers dropped to about 200. Since the Gray reprints began, about 50 papers have re-subscribed to the strip.

Robert S. Reed, president of the Chicago-based newspaper syndicate told **EDITOR & PUBLISHER** that subscribers and readers had

been complaining, about what Gray's successors had been doing to "our" Annie.

As a last-ditch effort, Reed brought in a retired newspaper editor to ferret through Gray's material and pick the most exciting sections. It was then decided to end Lettick's contract and begin circulating reprints.

"Why we didn't think of this before I don't know," Reed said, "It hits perfectly the current mood of nostalgia for the good things of the past."

Gray created **LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE** in 1924 at Joseph Medill Patterson's request. Patterson, at that time a full-scale media baron and owner of the syndicate, was looking for strips featuring a girl heroine.

But it was Gray's idea to use the strip as a tool for the furthering of his personal political philosophy. The strip always ran far to the right of the center, a philosophical bent the ultra-conservative Patterson obviously approved of.

Meanwhile, Lettick will continue to draw cartoons and caricatures for the **BOSTON GLOBE**. The Allston, Mass. native also does spot illustrations for the syndicate's **DR. BICYCLE** feature. □

BROWNE WINS AGAIN

Dik Browne, creator of the one-year-old **HAGAR THE HORRIBLE**, won his second Reuben Award this past April 22nd. The award is given by the National Cartoonist Society (NCS) to the cartoonist of the year.

The 57-year-old Browne's **HAGAR THE HORRIBLE** is distributed by King Features Syndicate, and appears in over 500 newspapers. He also co-writes and draws **HI AND LOIS**, for which he won his 1962 Reuben Award. Browne was also voted the NCS' best humor cartoonist in 1959 and 1960.

The second highest award of the NCS annual awards dinner at the Plaza Hotel was given to 74-year-old I. Klein, editor of **TOP CEL** magazine, which is written for members of the Motion Picture Screen Cartoonists. Klein is an animation pioneer who has worked for Walt Disney and was a staff cartoonist for **THE NEW YORKER** in the late twenties and early thirties.

There were also eleven other

plaques given to the top cartoonists in the other Reuben categories: Humor: Mell Lazarus for **MISS PEACH** and **MOMMA**; Story Strips: Dick Moores for **BO** and the daily **GASOLINE ALLEY**; Panels: George Lichty for **GRIN AND BEAR IT**; Sports cartoons: Bill Gallo, current president of the NCS, for his work in the New York **DAILY NEWS**; Editorial Cartoons: Pat Oliphant for his work in the **DENVER POST**; Special Features: Frank Fogarty; Humor Comic Books: Sergio Aragones for his work in **MAD MAGAZINE** and National; Story Comic Books: Frank Springer; Magazine gags: George Wolfe for his work in **TRUE, SATURDAY REVIEW** and for King Features; Animation: Johnny Hart for the television program **B.C., THE FIRST THANKSGIVING**; and Advertising and illustration: Allan Jaffee. □

NEWS BRIEFS...

—Steve Krantz, in the midst of producing the second Fritz the Cat movie, **THE NINE LIVES OF FRITZ THE CAT**, says the feature will be aimed at obtaining an "R" rating. "No one wants to get that heavy anymore," Krantz says about the decision to tone down the sexual orientation in the new Fritz feature. But the movie will certainly be more political than its "X" rated predecessor, **FRITZ THE CAT**. One of Fritz's lives will take place in 1984 when Henry Kissinger is president and Rose Mary Woods is still secretary. And while the movie is scheduled for May 1st completion, a section has been left open to include as much Watergate-related material as possible. □

—Nostalgia Press is reportedly up for sale. The company, completely owned by Woody Gelman, has been running at a deficit for several years and our sources tell us Gelman is not able to devote his full time to the operation. The asking price is said to be in the neighborhood of $100,000. □

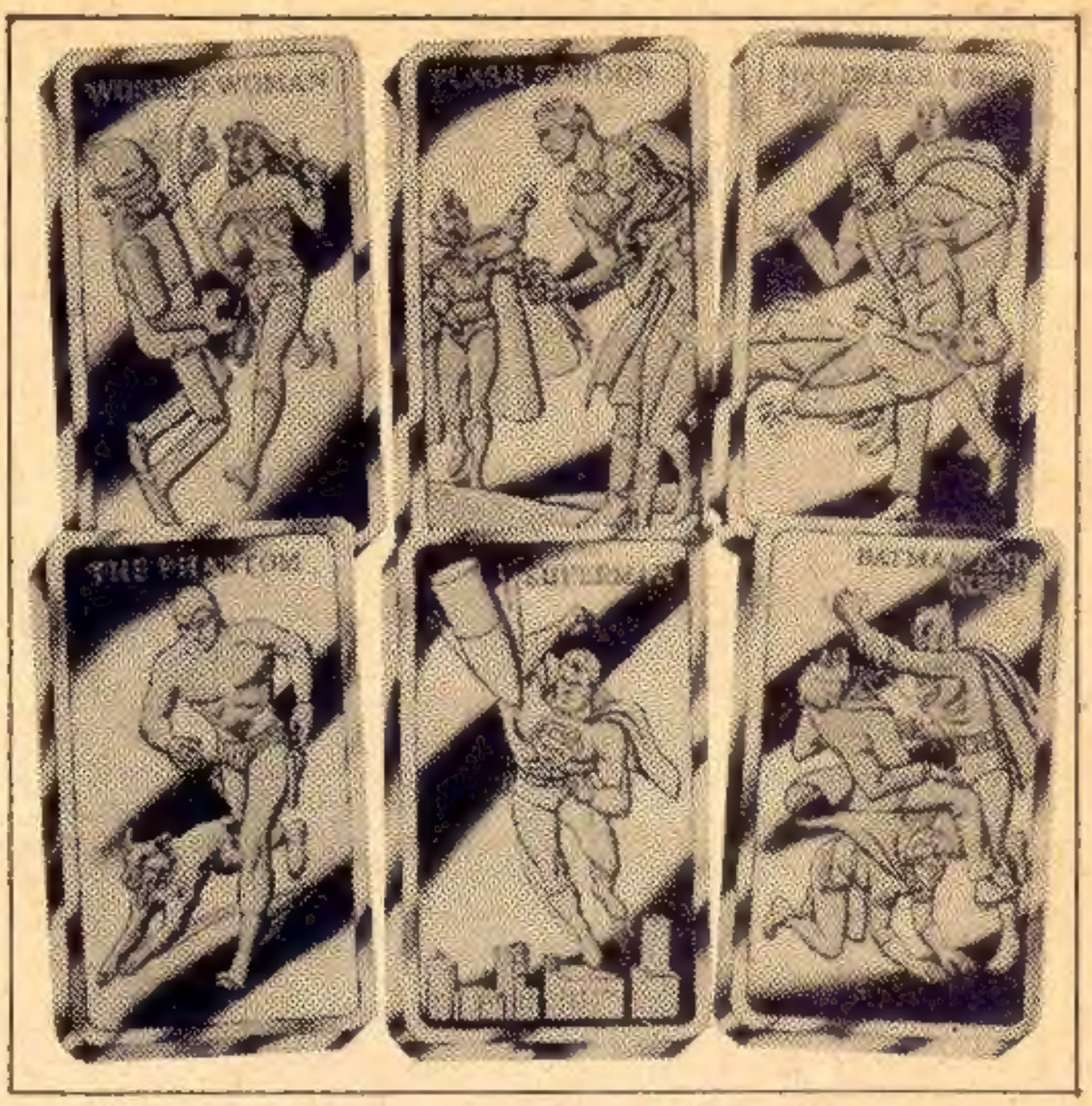
—Walt Disney Productions reported it had its most successful year for film rentals in 1973. It reported domestic income of over $40 million and foreign sales of over $25 million. □

—AMS Press, who will soon make microfilmed comic pages available to the general public, is offering a free color poster to hype the project. On the front side is a full-color montage drawing by Frank Meil; the reverse side contains all the relevant details about the project. For the poster, contact: Mr. Gerry Bowes, AMS Press, 56 E. 13th St., New York, N.Y. □

—The Supreme Court refused to review a lower court ruling which allowed Walt Disney Productions to take a 7 per cent investment tax credit on the cost of motion picture production. The government said that the decision could cost between $400 and $450 million in potential tax revenue. □

—East Coast Comix, publishers of the **EC CLASSIC REPRINT** series, may be raising their price from $1 to $1.25. Most of the possible rise, says Publisher Ron Barlow, would be eaten up by spiraling paper costs. While he said the price rise was "still under discussion," he also said that it appeared inevitable. □

—There's a bitter licensing controversy raging between Aurora Plastics and National Periodicals concerning Aurora's recent re-release of several model kits depicting National characters. The crux of the battle centers around Aurora's distribution of 5-page comic books with the models. Apparently, National wasn't made aware of the comics and were incensed when they appeared. But our National sources tell us Aurora was exercising a contract loophole to produce the books without NPP's blessing, consent or knowledge. □



—The International Numismatic Agency has announced it will distribute a new series of six silver and bronze bars, entitled "Heroes of the Comics." Selected to appear on the ingots are: Superman, Batman and Robin, Wonder Woman, The Phantom, Mandrake the Magician and Flash Gordon. Each of the bars will contain an ounce of silver or bronze and will be struck in gem proof quality. The ingots are expected to be ready by June 5, 1974, but advance orders are being taken at a reduced price: $6.50 for bronze bars or $15 for silver. After that date the prices rise to $7 and $18, respectively. Orders and requests for information should be directed to the Agency at: 96 Prince St., New York, N.Y. 10012. □

PEOPLE...

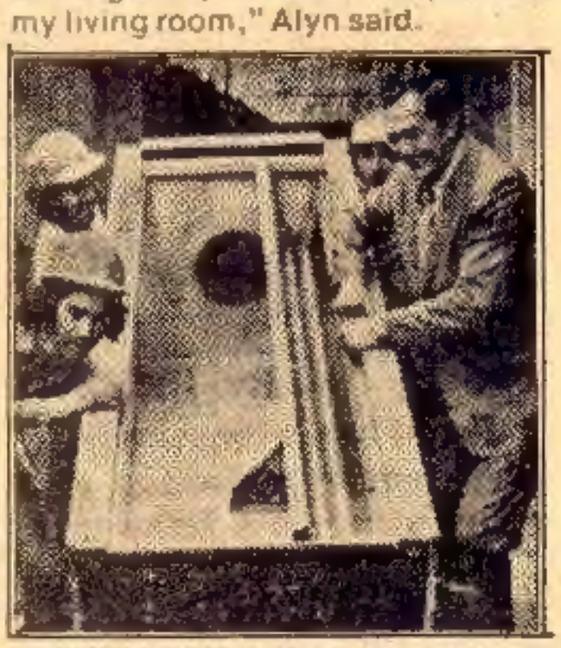
Jack Kirby is now drawing **OUR FIGHTING FORCES, KAMANDI**

and **OMAC**, however, his newest feature, tentatively titled **THE DINGBATS**, has been shelved. Three issues had been written and drawn but haven't been scheduled for release in the near future.

Maurice Horn will be editing the **WORLD ENCYCLOPEDIA OF COMIC ART** for the newly-revived Chelsea House publishers. The book will be a compendium of all the most important artists, writers and characters in the United States and the world. Aimed at library buyers, the book is slated to sell for about $23.

William Sarnoff, chairman of the board of Warner Publishing, Inc., wrote a letter to Lester Boutillier—a comic fan who complained that **SUPERGIRL** was not published often enough. Sarnoff said he would "look into your suggestion of more frequent publication" of the title.

Kirk Alyn, the screen Superman of the forties, has reacquired an old prop—the now legendary Clark Kent-changing-into-Superman telephone booth. When the Burbank Theater was being demolished this past March, he picked up the booth and left with it. He did need the assistance of three moving men, however. "I'll put it in my living room," Alyn said.



Richard Schweiker, Republican senator from Pennsylvania, told the Senate this past April 10th that $1,100 in American foreign aid had been used to finance a Panamian birth-control comic whose cover had a picture of the Virgin Mary and the caption: "Little Virgin, you who conceived without sinning, help me to sin without conceiving." Schweiker, who said 10,000 copies of the comic had been distributed, called the expenditure an "outrageous and distasteful use of U.S. tax funds."

Tug McGraw, the New York Mets' premier relief pitcher who coined the term "You gotta believe" during the team's 1973 pennant drive, is now working on a syndicated humor panel entitled "Scroojie." He's collaborating with ex-**LIFE** cartoonist Dave Fisher and former **NEW YORK POST** sports-writer Neil Offen, but there are no buyers so far.

Leonard Darvin and the staff of the Comics Code have moved from their Park Avenue digs to a new home at 41 E. 42nd St., New York City.

Bill Server, the head of Chemical Color Plate Corp., was honored this past April 16th by the Comics Magazine Association for his "extraordinary service to the industry." Server's company does most of the plate engraving for the comic book industry.

Warren King, editorial cartoonist for the New York **DAILY NEWS**, won the Overseas Press Club award for the best cartoon on foreign affairs.

Sherry Berne has been appointed as the new art director at Warren Publishing's Captain Company. She'll also be working in "editorial production," according to a Warren spokesman.

Steve Krantz and his production company have reportedly purchased the animation rights to the long-running Broadway musical play, **GREASE**. Sources tell us that the rights to the 1950's rock 'n roll production are already sealed and that pre-production has already begun on the West Coast.

C.C. Beck won't be drawing any more Marvel Family stories for National after all. A story he had written and submitted to National editors was returned with the go-ahead to illustrate, but Beck told us that "it has been completely rewritten. All my plot, motivation and character development had been taken out and silly, senseless scenes of The Marvel family flying about had been put in." Beck said he told National he "doesn't want anything further to do with DC." □

FABULOUS FRANK FRAZETTA POSTERS

There simply isn't anyone like Frank Frazetta. He's recognized as one of the all-time great fantasy illustrators. What else can we say?

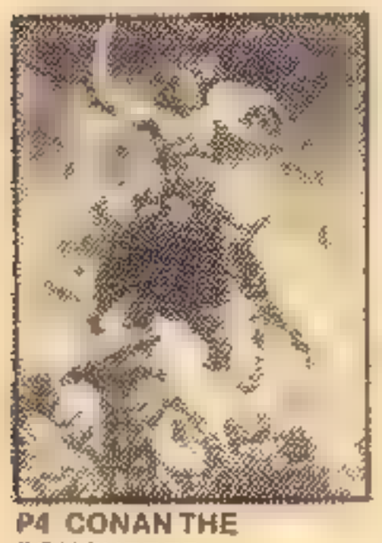
There are now 15 full-color Frank Frazetta posters in print. Each is on heavy, simulated canvas poster stock and measures approximately 19" by 23". They are, of course, suitable for framing

Each poster costs only $3 00 plus 60¢. Three different sets of five posters are also available for $15 00 per set

P1. WEREWOLF.
Cover of CREEPY 4

P2 BRAK THE BARBARIAN
Cover of the paperback book

P3 CONAN OF CIMMERIA Cover



P4 CONAN THE CONQUERER
Cover of the paperback

P5 SKIN DIVER
Cover of CREEPY 3.

P6. Complete set of P1 through P5. $15.

P7 BANSHEE
Cover of VAMPIRELLA 11.

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P9 NIGHTWALK
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P11 EGYPTIAN PRINCESS
Cover of EERIE 23

P12. Complete set of P7 through P11. $15

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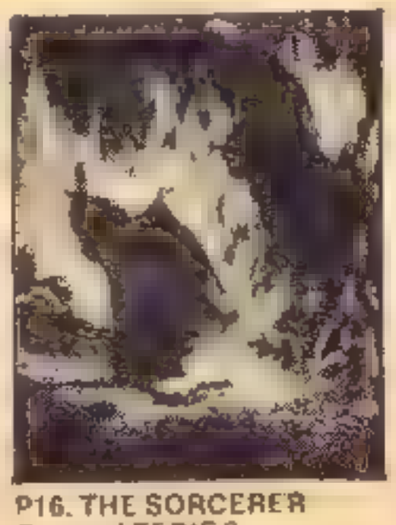
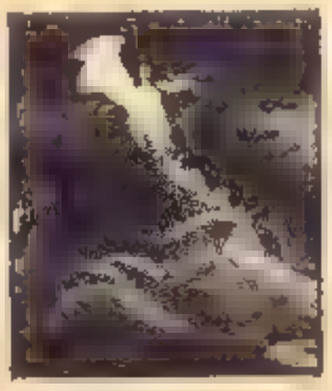
Cover of EERIE 8

P14 PHOENIX PRIME
Cover of Ted White book

P15 SUN GODDESS
Cover of VAMPIRELLA 7



P16. THE SORCERER
Cover of EERIE 2



P17 THE SEA WITCH
Cover is perhaps Frazetta's best

P18 Complete set of P13 through P17. $15

DRACULA LIVES!!!

These English imports are among the most amazing comic art magazines ever published. Artwork by Esteban Maroto, Enrich Sic and many other of the Spanish greats, it contains the further adventures of Wolff, Maroto's great adventure character. Each issue is in full color—inside and outside. Each volume is 24 pages long and costs only $1 00 plus 35¢. Or you can get the whole set of twelve for only $12 50

The last six of these books have never seen print in the United States. These are the only English translations

DRACULA #1 Cover by Enrich Sic. Inset poster by Maroto Stories by Maroto, Sic and Bea

DRACULA #2 Cover by Sic Stories by Maroto Bea Solsona and Sic

DRACULA #3 Cover by Sic Stories by Maroto, Bea and Sic

DRACULA #4 Cover by Sic Stories by Maroto Bea and Sic

DRACULA #5 Cover by Sic Stories by Maroto Bea and Sic

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DRACULA #12 Cover by Sic Stories by Maroto Bea Sic and Carlos

DRACULA #11 Cover by Maroto Stories by Maroto Bea Solsona and Sic

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Working for Mickey Mouse

By David Marlow

A year ago at a story conference held at the Walt Disney studios in Burbank, California, I sat around talking with a producer and two writers. All three had had many years' experience with the Disney organization. We were trying to come up with a new ending for a projected movie script. After discussing possible alternatives, the producer turned to the two writers and asked, "How would Walt have done it?" The two writers thought a moment and then concurred on how Walt would have ended the story, and everyone agreed to go with that.

The incident was typical of how creativity works in this multimillion-dollar outfit, and typified the lengths to which its staff will go to keep Disney's delicate touch alive.

But let's face it, kids. Walt is dead, and now, on the occasion of Disney Productions' Golden Anniversary, it seems apparent that the glitter of the Disney formula is tarnishing.

It's not so much a question of "what Walt would have done," but rather that there is nothing else that can be done. Walt is gone and the Disney staff have nothing else going for them. He was their Main Street of genius and inspiration, and since his death they've found no new avenues to travel.

Two recent releases have been clinkers. The first, **Now You See Him, Now You Don't**, was in and out of theaters so fast that the title became an adequate description of its box-office performance level. The second, **Charlie and the Angel**, was saved by teaming it with a re-release of an old reliable, **Cinderella**.

I thought, before I worked for it, that the Disney institution stood for Mickey Mouse and Disneyland and Pinocchio and good, clean, fun films like **The $1,000,000 Duck**. I was sure the Disney product was simple, wholesome, occasionally inspired corn which kept our kids happy and entertained. And some of it does.

But in the time I was there, I came to realize that, although some Disney films are as innocently corny as I had thought, they are more likely to come off as harmful, misleading propaganda depicting an unrealistic, sexist, gun glamorous society. True, other movie companies may not exactly be upstanding purveyors of decency and wholesomeness, but we have come to regard the Disney product as the shining exception. I wish it were so.

Let me explain how I came to work for Mickey Mouse, et al., in the first place. It began as I was half-heartedly thumbing through the lastest **Publishers Weekly**; a small ad toward the back caught my eye.

MAJOR MOTION PICTURE COMPANY LOOKING FOR EAST COAST EDITOR. SEND RESUME TO SUCH AND SUCH BOX OFFICE.

It seemed interesting enough, but also somewhat mysterious, since the "Major Motion Picture Company" was not named.

Two days later, Steve Sheppard, an agent friend, phoned with the following news. Apparently a friend of his, Saul Cohen, had been working for several years for Walt Disney's New York offices and had just discovered he was going to be fired sometime in the near future—although no one in the company had as yet said anything to him about it. He knew because he had seen an ad for his job in **Publishers Weekly** ... the same mysterious ad I saw. Disney Productions had taken the identical ad the last time they had replaced their story editor. Which is somewhat like reading your own autopsy report.

I duly sent in a resume. Days later a letter on Disney stationery arrived, very stern, saying I was to be at the Park Lane Hotel at such and such a time; I should show up only if possessed with a genuine and sincere interest in the company and in its product.

I arrived at the Park Lane dressed cautiously in gray suit and unfestive tie. There I met Frank Paris, the West Coast story editor, a chummy, boyish company man in his mid 40s. We chatted for over an hour, at the end of which he asked me what my religious preference was.

A week or so later, I had made it to the finals and was at the studio in Burbank 9 a.m., ready for a full day of interviews. The day was spent going from one crew cut to another. I even got to meet the president of the whole works, Cardon Walker. He said that unlike other studios that have production quotas because of limited funds, Disney had set no quota and had the capacity as well as the desire to make many more films. And that the Disney organization anticipated revenues of $300 million in 1972, one-third from films alone. So available money was obviously no problem. He said the only drawback to a busier production schedule was the lack of material. I told him that I had worked for United Artists as story editor in New York; I knew a lot of people and could try to get him more material. He said fine, and apparently satisfied, ended the audience—at which time I made my first mistake. I walked toward the door, and said, "Goodbye, Mr. Walker."

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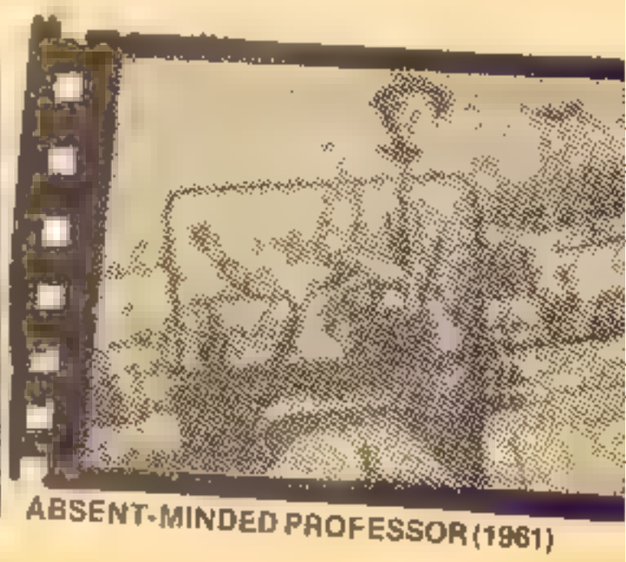
THE UGLY DACHSHUND (1966)

MARY POPPINS (1964)

SNOW WHITE (1937)



ABSENT-MINDED PROFESSOR (1961)

THE JUNGLE BOOK (1

No one in the Disney family is called **Mr.** anything. Everyone, but everyone, is on a first-name basis. The custodian calls the president "Card" and the president calls the custodian "Henry. Reminds one of the roll calls the Mouseketeers used to peel off. "I'm Tommy!" "I'm Darlene!" "I'm Annette!"

The morning passed quickly and we went to lunch in the studio cafe. I sat with Frank Paris and Bill Dover, the executive story editor. With an affectionate glint in his eye, Dover explained that using first names had been Walt's idea in order to create loyalty within the company. He then added, "Walt says the reason is ..." Walt says!

Lunch over, I went to meet the rest of the executives who were to decide my [illegible]. I met Ron Miller, vice president in charge of production—an amiable ex-football player who is married to Diane Disney, one of Walt's two daughters—and Roy E. Disney, a vice president whose specialty is animal films. He is Walt's nephew and Roy O. Disney's son.

I flew home as the new East Coast story editor and went, the following Monday morning, to the New York office to begin my three month tour of duty. It's a drab, rather smallish setup, occupying only the second floor of an old building at 477 Madison Avenue.

I settled down and began to familiarize myself with the workings of the office. And things slowly became a bit clearer. The word from the publishers was that Saul Cohen, my predecessor, could not have been more efficient in his tenure there. So why, then, had he been let go? Because the New York story department had become the company whipping boy. It works something like this: whenever production slows down in Burbank, the president asks the vice president how come and the vice president asks the producers how come and the producers ask the executive story editor how come and the executive story editor says the New York story department is how come. Since this is about as far down as "how come" can come, there is usually general agreement in Burbank that a vital key to all production problems lies in a spring housecleaning in the New York story department. (Which helps explain why there have been five story editors in as many years).

The product I had been encouraged to find was material intended for "General Audiences." Not satisfied with getting just the kids' cash, the Disneyites were now hoping to get parents to accompany their children to the theaters, thereby doubling admissions. I had been told the main thing to look for in a potential Disney property was good taste. Nothing even slightly offensive could be considered. No sex. No politics. No foul language, and, as we shall see, no relation to reality.

The executives at Disney wisely concluded that since I hadn't seen a Disney film in years, it might be difficult for me to spot a potential property. With this in mind, they decided to ship out films, starting more or less with their most recent releases, and then working backward, covering a period of perhaps ten years. I saw Westerns and musicals and animal stories. I saw films with gimmicks and full-length cartoons. I saw outdoorsy films that made fools of women and heroes of boys. I saw 54 films. Quite a retrospective. And, viewed over a period of only four weeks, they provided not only a comprehensive understanding of the Disney formula, but also a severe dislike for children, cuddly animals, cars that fly and Dean Jones.

The problem for me was that their acceptable standards were far different than mine. A good examply of this difference of opinion is a film called **The Biscuit Eater**, which is an ode to a boy and his dog ... and his gun. The hero is a red headed twelve-year-old who tries to train his dog to hold still and point while he shoots quail.

This glamour-of-the gun tack is not a single-film affair. A film called **Big Red** is another gun-and hunting saga, with attractive Walter Pidgeon gloriously shooting birds from the sky. And then there's **Those Calloways**, more of the same. Guns and hunting.

As it turns out, none of the films in this "gun totin'" genre have been big moneymakers for the company.

I started to get the feeling that Disney films were not quite as I had remembered. And, to make matters worse, I screened **The $1,000,000 Duck**, a silly tale starring Dean Jones, whose pet duck passes through an activated radiation device and then begins to temporarily lay golden eggs. The film also produced a golden egg at the box office, bringing in millions. It is among **Variety**'s 100 all-time top grossing films.

Duck is an example of the Disney Gimmick Film, a tried and true formula that has worked for years. It began way back when in **The Absent Minded Professor**, with Fred MacMurray.

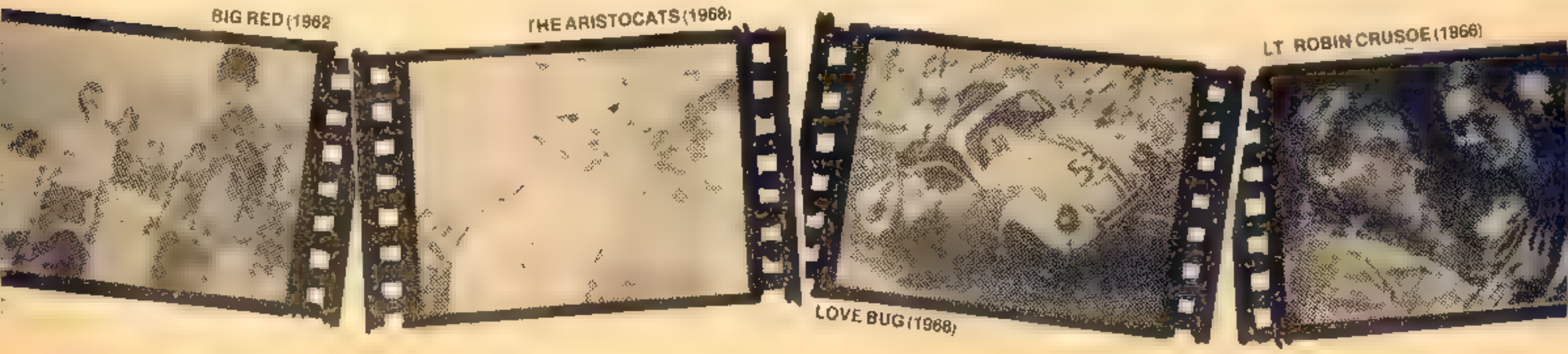
The Gimmick formula is almost guaranteed gravy in Disney films, and in the days ahead, I sat through the following variations of its slick form: in **The Computer Wore Tennis Shoes** it is a dumb college kid instead of a dumb duck who gets an electric jolt from a computer and turns, temporarily, into a genius. The film brought in rentals of nearly $6 million in the United States and Canada alone. In **The Misadventures of Merlin Jones** it is a lad dealing in electrical brain waves who gets the now-familiar jolt. **The Love Bug** was Dean Jones (again) as the object of a sensitive Volkswagen's affections. At last count the film had brought in over $21 million in the United States alone. **The Barefoot Executive** is a ditty about a chimp who picks top-rated television shows by hissing or applauding. Add to these classics screenings of **The Ugly Dachshund, Monkeys Go Home, The Monkey's Uncle** and **Son of Flubber**, and you've done the cycle.

The Gimmick Film, for all its lack of style and artistry, is numbing, escapist entertainment that happens to make money.

There is another Gimmick story now under discussion in Burbank. It tells the story of a dog who runs for the Presidency of the United States. However, while working on the story line, the Disney executives got together and decided that this could conceivably come off as disrespectful and offensive to the White House. So the story line has been changed and presumably offends no one, since the tale now allows the dog to run for the Senate or the governorship of California instead.

The next difference of opinion between the Disney policymakers and me concerned their attitude toward women. In **Rascal**, the daughter of widower Steve Forrest comes home from Chicago to tell him that she is going to have to give up her engagement and her marriage plans because ever since Mom died and the housekeeper left, the place is a mess and no one is cooking proper meals anymore or looking after her twelve-year-old brother. A case can surely be made that most movie companies have presented women as sex objects. But Disney has its own way of demeaning women.

In the films I saw, the heroes were nearly always bachelors or widowers. And when they were married, the wives never seemed to get out of their kitchens. Further screenings reinforced



this and revealed the following:

In **King of the Grizzlies** and **Charles, The Lonesome Cougar**, the heroes were bachelors. And nary a romantic interest in sight. In **Rascal, Big Red, Scandalous John** and **The Horse in the Grey Flannel Suit**, the heroes were all widowers. And for no dramatic reason. And in **A Tiger Walks, The Ugly Dachshund, Those Calloways** and **The Wild Country**, the wives never strayed far from their kitchen sinks.

Lt. Robin Crusoe, U.S.N. brought in nearly $8 million and has Dick Van Dyke as a Navy man washed up on some South Pacific isle inhabited only by women. But the native girls are not dark-skinned, as regency might **offend**, so these girls are Eurasians, practically white, and they wear exotic kimonos that start at the collar bone.

In **Napoleon and Samantha**, boy tells girl it's all right for her to cry 'cause she's a girl; he can't 'cause he's a guy.

Those who are shelling out dollars for Disney on rainy afternoons to protect their offspring from violent porno/monster films should not be so certain their children will be better off.

Trying to maintain a realistic attitude about what I was doing, I more actively pursued the acquisition of material; screenplays, manuscripts, novels. However, I was constantly frustrated and found myself having to fight Disney's reputation among agents and publishers for being unbelievably cheap with writers. Disney contends that other studios don't want the properties in which Disney might be interested and so, if there is rarely competitive bidding, why should it pay anything but the bare minimum? The studio doesn't even counter its low purchases with the customary small percentage interest in the film so everyone can get rich should the film strike gold. By the same token, no outside producer in the past ten years has brought Disney a deal already packaged. Disney has seven producers in its small family, and outsiders are not taken to kindly

One afternoon the president of the company, "Card," walked into my office unannounced, which was sort of a surprise. He rattled off hastily that "We gotta get more product" and "We gotta be careful"; that a film we'd made called **Bon Voyage** had had that prostitute scene which offended a lot of people.

The following week I got to see **Bon Voyage**. The film brought in domestic rentals of $5 million and is a fiasco about an American family on summer vacation in Europe. The daring scene in question involves Fred MacMurray, naturally, sitting alone at a table in a corner bistro, feeling kind of blue. A very pleasant, well-groomed woman, dressed in plain clothes and wearing very little make-up, walks up and asks if she can sit with him for a moment or so. She does and they discuss Europe and why he's feeling low and she suggests he go home to his wife and then, never once having mentioned sex or money, leaves. If Card hadn't told me it was an offensive prostitute scene, the whole thing would have gone right over my head.

As for the two musicals I saw, every one knows either from the first viewing or the current re-issue that **Mary Poppins** is an accident—a happy, $31-million-grossing blend of Julie Andrews, chimney sweeps, animation and charm. What they don't know is what a heavy, tuneless, over-long and powerfully dull saga is its follow up, **Bedknobs and Broomsticks**. The film was made after Walt's death, and it is the qualitative difference between these two films that sets the tone for current fare. The simple truth is this: when Walt was alive it was often hit-or-miss. Some films fell on their faces. Others were pure genius. But since his death, Disney Productions has yet to produce one artistically sound film.

Over the course of the summer I screened all the Disney full-length animated features from **Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs** through **The Aristocats**. The earlier works like **Pinocchio, Cinderella**, and the greatly underrated **Alice in Wonderland** are not only the best, but are far superior to the later works in their approaches to story line, humor, magic, excitement, humanity and attention to detail. On the other hand, the two most recent releases (post Walt), **The Aristocats** and **The Jungle Book**, are humorless, lacking charm and far more "cartoony" than all the other animated works. They have, nonetheless, turned out to be the most profitable. To date, **The Aristocats** has grossed, on only its first worldwide release, a staggering $26 million. And **The Jungle Book**, made three years earlier, has taken in over $25.5 million

Scandalous John, made for the college crowd, was a recent effort of some interest. It was something of a gamble, and word was that had the film made more than its disappointing $1.5 million, it might have served to open new avenues for the Disney producers. But the film flopped dismally and that ended experimentation with other markets. That it failed because it was an inexcusably dull film that could never have made it under any studio banner was overlooked

While in charge, Walt enjoyed his power as creative leader so much that he seems to have surrounded himself only with those men who shared his vision, essentially yes-men. There was no one to take over after him. No legacy of genius was left behind, so we have been getting since his death, not the real thing, but mock Disney

In New York I ran up against frustrating rejections on properties I submitted. Everything was either:

1) Too juvenile—nothing in it for adults

2) Too adult—nothing in it for kids.

3) Too controversial and or offensive

So after three months I gave up. I couldn't find the material they wanted and they wouldn't consider doing the things I was submitting. Frank Paris and I chatted again and came to our first mutual understanding in agreeing that I didn't belong on the Disney team. At least I had the advantage of not looking forward to reading an ad for my replacement in **Publishers Weekly**.

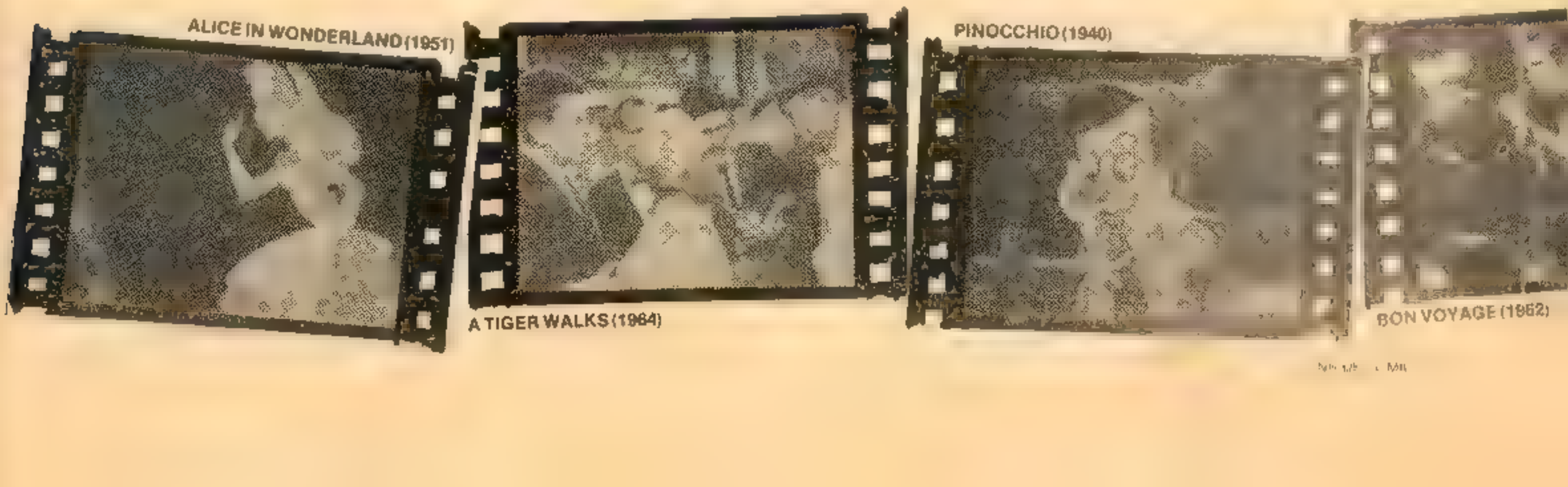
So I turned in my Mickey Mouse ears, my Pinocchio nose, my Gooty grin, and bade them a fond farewell. Frank Paris wished me luck and I offered it back to them.

But they don't need it

The Disney organization gave up depending on luck long ago. Every part of the gold mine formula is carefully planned with cold calculation and a keen eye to profit margins and the latest stock quotations. It's been an incredible climb, those 50 years. Disneyland, as well as the new Walt Disney World in Florida, flourishes. Subsidiary merchandise is at a $27 million annual peak. Even the Disney films that fall flat at the box office can be recycled into segments on the weekly Disney television show. It's a most successful outfit

But I wonder

If the movie folks at the World of Disney don't stop counting receipts long enough to pay attention to the more sophisticated needs and the up-dated [illegible] styles and tempos of today's General Audience, they may not even notice Cinderella's castle sinking ever so slowly into the moat



Kurtzman ponders the future of HUMBUG (left), bubbles over some HELP! copy (center) and reviews pages of LITTLE ANNIE FANNIE at right

Conversations with the Brother-in-Law of Underground Comix

By Jeffrey H. Wasserman

It only seems like Harvey Kurtzman's been around forever. It only seems like Harvey Kurtzman's invented every type of satire there is (not to mention the comic book war story). And it only seems like Will Elder's been with him all the time.

If you were a child of the fifties, Harvey Kurtzman might have been the guy who edited all those frighteningly realistic EC war stories. You know, the ones that made his competitors' books read like so many superhuman John Waynes beating up on inscrutible Nips and despicable Nazis.

You might also have known the sweeter Harvey Kurtzman if you were a child of the early fifties. The Kurtzman that developed the hilariously funny **MAD** magazine. The Kurtzman that made you think of Super-duperman every time you thought of Superman; the guy who made you think of Starchie every time you thought of Archie.

Or maybe you were a teenager in the late fifties when Harvey Kurtzman briefly blazed across the magazine field with two of the greatest satire magazines ever produced. Maybe you remembered the super-slick, super-sophisticated **TRUMP**. Or the unassumingly riotous **HUMBUG**.

More likely, though, you were a card-carrying member of the **AMERICAN GRAFITTI** generation. And you read **HELP!** magazine—and laughed. Or maybe you couldn't believe your eyes when **HELP!** displayed the talents of dozens of the world's best known performers.

(And if you were unusually sophisticated back then, you filed names like Bob Crumb and Jay Lynch and Denis Kitchen in the back of your mind—all those peculiar names that popped up in **HELP!**'s "Public Gallery." All those names who eventually became the backbone of the underground comix movement of the late sixties.)

And now you're part of the whole world which knows Kurtzman as the co-artist and co-writer of **LITTLE ANNIE FANNIE**, the most expensive and lavish comic strip in the world. Annie, the modern-day sexual Pollyanna, finally shot Kurtzman into fame, fortune, acclaim ... and, a Parker Brothers pen commercial.

But Kurtzman **hasn't** been around forever and he **didn't** even invent satire But as he nears his fiftieth birthday, Kurtzman is perhaps the satire field's most versatile and most accomplished practitioner

Roger Price, no satiric slouch himself, once rendered the quintessential description of Harvey Kurtzman:

"He is 5-feet, 6-inches tall, has a physique that is just barely noticeable and a long expression. In fact, Harvey looks like a beagle who is too polite to mention that someone is standing on his tail. This beagleishness has certain compensations—his is never ordered off the grass in Central Park and pretty girls stop on the street to scratch him behind the ears."

But despite being barely noticeable physically, Kurtzman has left his mark in comic art. His version of **MAD** stands as the prototype for the successful humor book. And **LITTLE ANNIE FANNIE** might be the best known comic strip this side of **PEANUTS**.

Today, over two decades after he mistakenly entered EC's offices looking for educational comics, he still produces on the average of four **ANNIE FANNIE** strips a year for **PLAYBOY**. He's also teaching a course in satiric cartooning at his alma mater, The School of Visual Arts.

After one of his SVA lectures, we spoke to Kurtzman at the apartment of magazine illustrator Barbara Nessim. Besides telling us that his oft promised book on comic art will eventually be published ("Woody Gelman has had it for what seems like 28 years now"), he gave us some of his impressions of his long career as comic art's premier humor artist.

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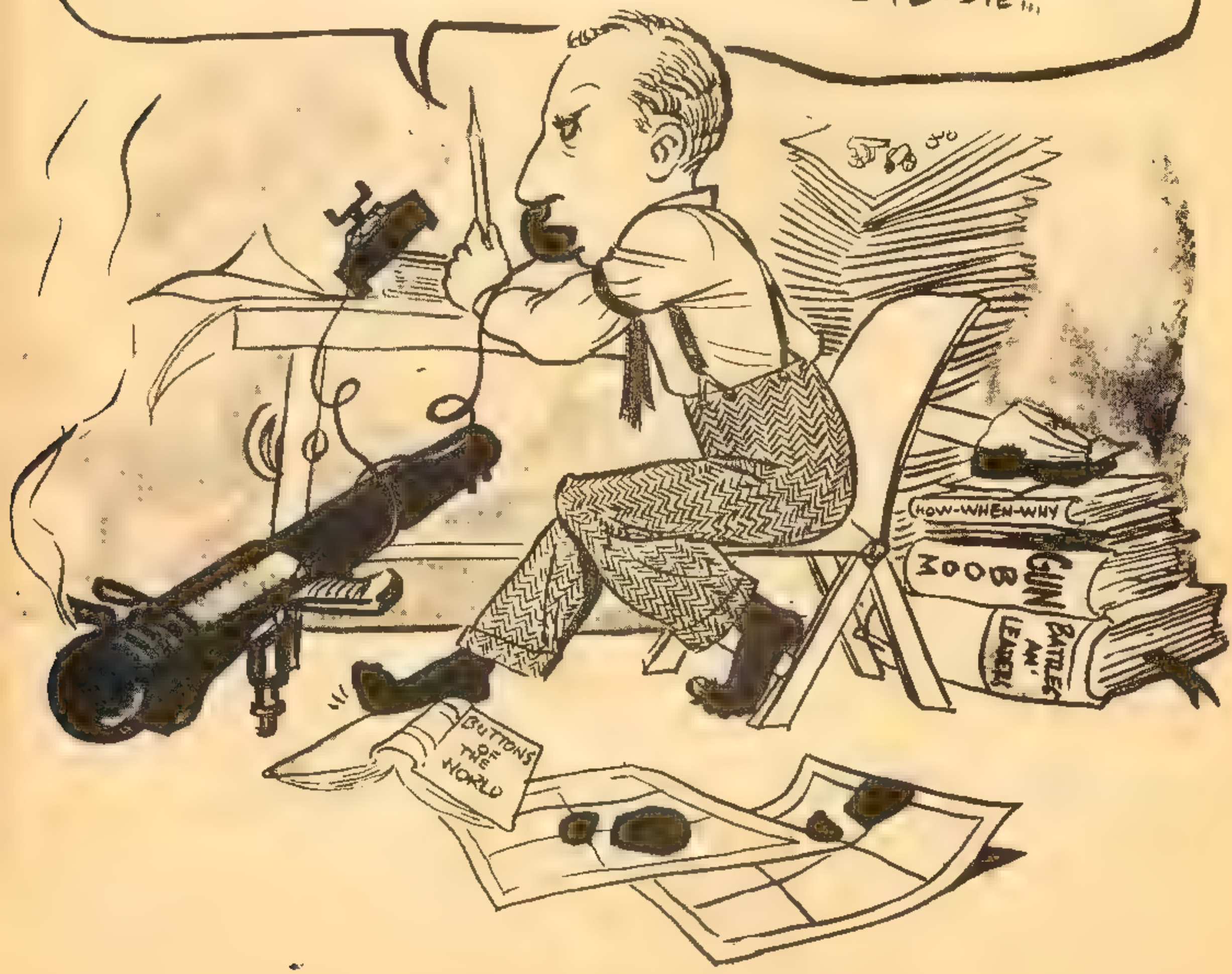

Harvey Kurtzman doing some of his legendary research for the old EC war books.
Marie Severin drew this caricature for the 1953 EC Christmas party.

MONSTER TIMES BOOKSHELF

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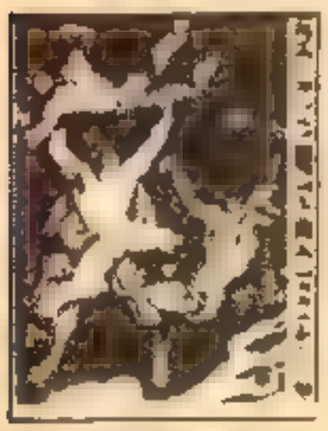
GRAY MORROW'S SORCERY The initial effort by Red Circle (Archie) into serious comics. The issue is written, penciled, inked, colored and edited by Gray Morrow. He did the color cover too. Only 75c plus 25c



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EC REPRINT #5 is actually **WEIRD FANTASY #13** and contains the following stories: "Home to Stay" by Wally Wood, "The Trip" by Jack Kamen, "The End," by Wally Wood and "Our Cousin Yuk" Chickeens" by Joe Orlando. $1.00 plus 25¢

EC REPRINT #6 is actually **CRIME SUSPENSTORIES #25** and contains [illegible] Kamen, "Dog Food" by Reed Crandall, "Key Chain" by Bernie Krigstein and "The Squealer" by George Evans. $1.00 plus 25c

E.C. REPRINT #7 is [illegible] **THE VAULT OF HORROR #26** "Two of a Kind" by Craig, "Complete" by David [illegible] Hall-Way [illegible] ible by Sid Check and Hook, Line and Sinker" by Ingels. $1 plus 25¢

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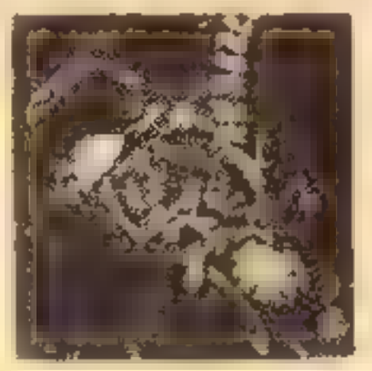

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The first MAD premiered in late 1952 from then on it was one success after the other While the early MAD comics sported the traditional Kurtzman cover (left), magazine MADs like 1955's MAD #26 (right) used other illustrators and paid more attention to design concepts The fake "Beck for Beautiful Hair" ad was typical of Kurtzman's parodies; they were so exact, real advertising ran with the caption "Ok, now, all kidding aside, these are real advertisements!!!"

MAD MAGAZINE

WASSERMAN: You've kept up with **MAD** and said you've looked through it from time to time. It's a far cry from the **MAD** you conceived and you must have had quite a lot of ideas for the magazine. Were any of them implemented in Feldstein's **MAD**?

KURTZMAN: I can't recall that ... yeah, I had a lot of ideas but Feldstein carried on in his own direction. He didn't take the turns that I might have taken.

I would have liked a greater degree of adult satire—what I consider adult satire—in MAD. I think today's MAD has been designed for a very, very young readership. I would've gone for a more adult readership and I would have done that by the material and the graphics.

WASSERMAN: You've mentioned that you thought the **NATIONAL LAMPOON** parody of Bill Gaines was kind to you and somehow seemed hinged on two basic philosophies: yours being a much deeper one about humor and how to contend with it; Gaines' being a "ha, ha, yuk it up" and be done with it view.

KURTZMAN: My philosophy was much sweeter, much milder. The LAMPOON thing was very friendly to me and I liked it, but despite the differences in our basic philosophy, I don't know that my ideas about humor were more valid than Gaines'. As a matter of fact, I think his philosophy was always more realistic relative to the marketplace. He and Feldstein always turned out a more viable product than I did.

WASSERMAN: In the Gaines biography, Frank Jacobs quoted a **PLAYBOY** executive as saying that **MAD** was successful because there was a William Gaines to temper your ideas. He seemed to feel that, if left to your own devices, you'd bankrupt the magazine.

KURTZMAN: Who knows? He may have been right. I think Gaines probably had a much better instinct for running a sound business organization than I do or did.

WASSERMAN: Did this cause your eventual departure from **MAD**? The dispute has been hashed and rehashed dozens of times; and it's always written that you were fighting for editorial control and Gaines thought you wanted economic control.

KURTZMAN: We were both operating with a certain degree of misunderstanding. There was a lot of emotion between us at the time. And while I wanted editorial freedom, I also wanted some kind of personal financial security in MAD's future. I didn't see any working future for me with things the way they were. I felt that if I couldn't get a better arrangement, there was no point in continuing—the situation we were working under wasn't happy for me and it wasn't happy for Gaines.

WASSERMAN: Couldn't you have asserted yourself in other ways? It really seemed to me that those early **MAD**s were Harvey Kurtzman and Harvey Kurtzman was **MAD** magazine.

KURTZMAN: Well, actually, I used to have that misbegotten notion myself. MAD magazine wasn't Harvey Kurtzman; it was whoever owned the copyright.

WASSERMAN: Still, your brand of humor

KURTZMAN: Of course, I had my own specific humor and my stuff had my fingerprints, my trademark. But after I left, I'm sure my fingerprints left with me; it apparently didn't make any difference.

As a matter of fact, Feldstein did a fine job of making the magazine a success. Who is to say his approach was any less legitimate than mine—if not even more legitimate than mine—since his MAD was also successful. And successful is quite an understatement.

WASSERMAN: Were these philosophical differences between you and Gaines unique to **MAD**? Did you ever clash over the handling of the other books?

KURTZMAN: Yeah, we always had a certain amount of disagreement, but it really got to be very difficult during the MAD days. It was much more pronounced. Our differences really became important during MAD.

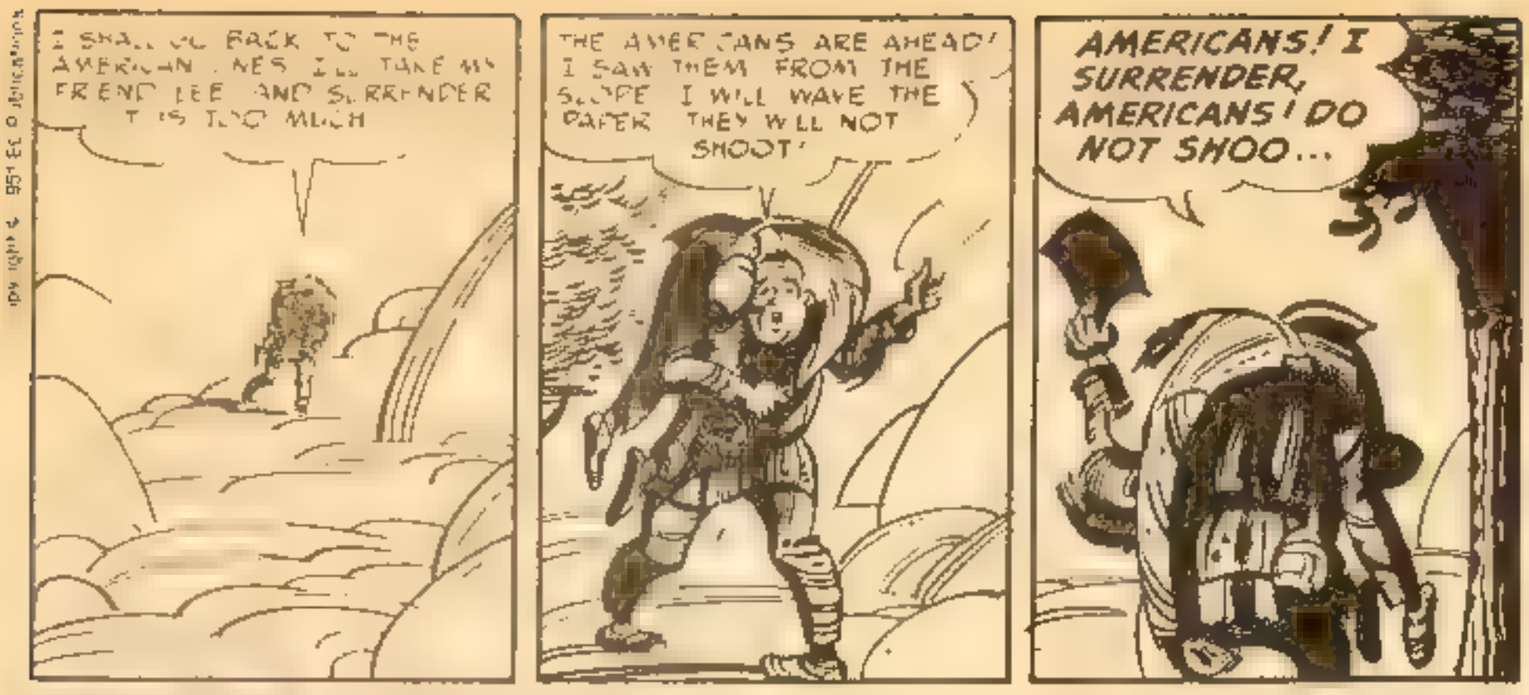
The EC years were always turbulent, and MAD was a turning point for me. As a result, a whole new set of frictions developed.

But MAD had the excitement of a winner. There was a feeling in the air that we were onto something very hot and things started happening that were very exciting. People got in touch with us, interviews, cooperation from artists. There were all kinds of things that happened.

With a successful magazine, you generate all kinds of excitement and activity. Ernie Kovacs called us and we did something with him. Roger Price turned out to be one of our fans. Stan Freeberg got in touch with us. Hugh Hefner got in touch with us. It generated that kind of excitement. These people didn't necessarily want anything; they were just excited by the magazine.

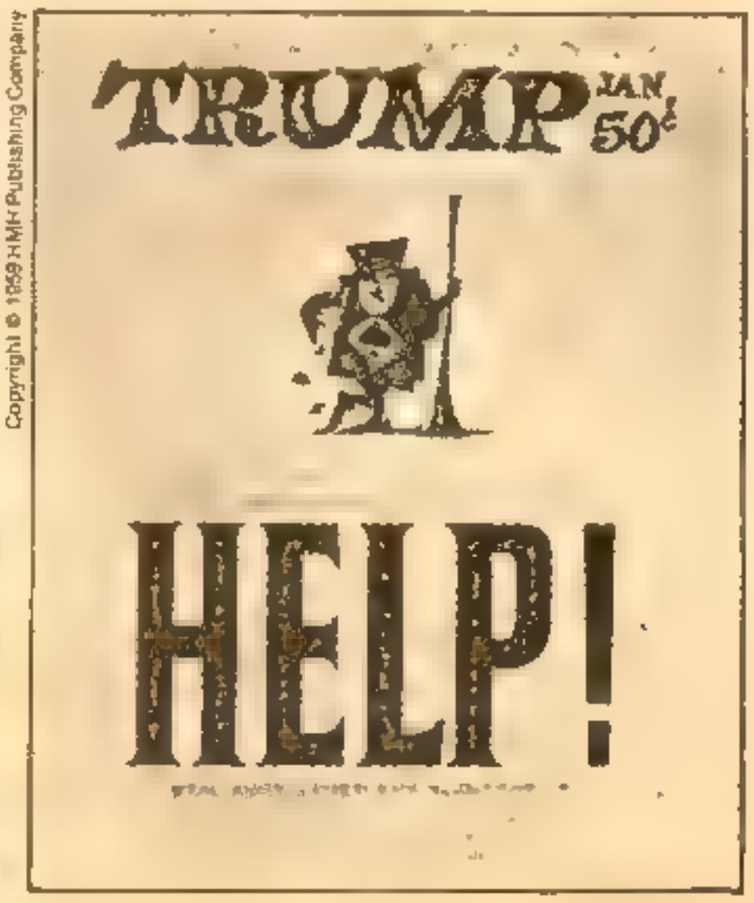
THE WAR BOOKS

WASSERMAN: Whenever anyone talks about **TWO-FISTED TALES** and **FRONTLINE COMBAT**, the first thing mentioned is the exhaustive research involved. Don't you think the books could have stood up as an entity without so much regard to minor details?


I SHALL GO BACK TO THE AMERICAN LINES I'LL TAKE MY FRIEND LEE AND SURRENDER THIS IS TOO MUCH
THE AMERICANS ARE AHEAD! I SAW THEM FROM THE SCOPE I WILL WAVE THE PAPER THEY WILL NOT SHOOT!
AMERICANS! I SURRENDER, AMERICANS! DO NOT SHOO...

POW!
THE MORTAR SQUAD IS NO MORE! LEE SPRAWLS ON THE PATH, TWICE KILLED LONG DEAD
POOR CLUMSY 'BIG FEET' LIES WITH HIS FACE IN THE BLOODY DIRT HIS BIG FOOT CAUGHT ON A WIRE!
THE WIRE TRAILS TO THE RING OF A PULL CORD DANGLING BENEATH THE REMAINS OF A HAND GRENADE!

Above: The last page of "Air Burst," a typically ironic war story written and drawn by Harvey Kurtzman. Below: Kurtzman's self portrait from HUMBUG, and TRUMP #1, one of the few unsuccessful Hefner publications.



KURTZMAN: No, I think it was the material that made the stories. Of course, you can fake it; you can even fake it with a great deal of success because the reader isn't necessarily interested in your research. But nothing comes from nothing. You have to start with something, and when you're writing comic stories you have to touch the nerve ends of the reader and give him a good time.

To me, everything starts with reality. Reality is the grist for your mill whether you turn it into fantasies or whatever. It all starts with something that actually happened ... something real.

I like to think we started a type of war story that didn't exist up until then. I got my initial inspiration from real events.

All the comic book companies eventually borrowed the war technique we started and built stories on the basis of reality. They'd turned out god-knows-how-many stories that were built on total fantasy. I like to think that it was our research that started the whole realism trend and made that whole market possible.

Our books added a dimension to war stories. They were no longer happy—the war stories they used to do before ours were terrible for kids. They made war into a happy event where the American superman would go around beating up buck-toothed yellow men. They didn't reflect the horror and complete evil of war, the truly evil nature of war. Now they do. Now they treat war as horrible. It wasn't that way before we did our research

WASSERMAN: You were able to usher in a sort of "humanistic" approach about war that...

KURTZMAN: I don't know if it was humanistic. Perhaps a more realistic perspective of war so as not to give young people false notions. To make war into something glamorous and wonderful is a terrible immorality.

TRUMP AND HUMBUG MAGAZINES

WASSERMAN: You eventually wound up editing **TRUMP** for **PLAYBOY**. Did you find your situation at **TRUMP** magazine better than the **MAD** situation?

KURTZMAN: Oh God, that period of TRUMP magazine was one of the most glorious times I've ever had. I got many of the things I couldn't get at MAD, including a percentage of the magazine itself—a stock percentage.

WASSERMAN: **TRUMP**'s demise has been blamed on very high production costs. Other people seem to disagree. In any event, we know it was a tough time for the Hefner empire. Do you know the "real" story of **TRUMP**'s death?

KURTZMAN: I don't really know the story on why TRUMP failed. There are several stories, including my own, and you choose the story you like. As I understood it, we had a very respectable sale. Certainly the kind of sale that under normal circumstances would justify our staying in business; but it was a very peculiar time for Hefner's magazines. It was a very peculiar time

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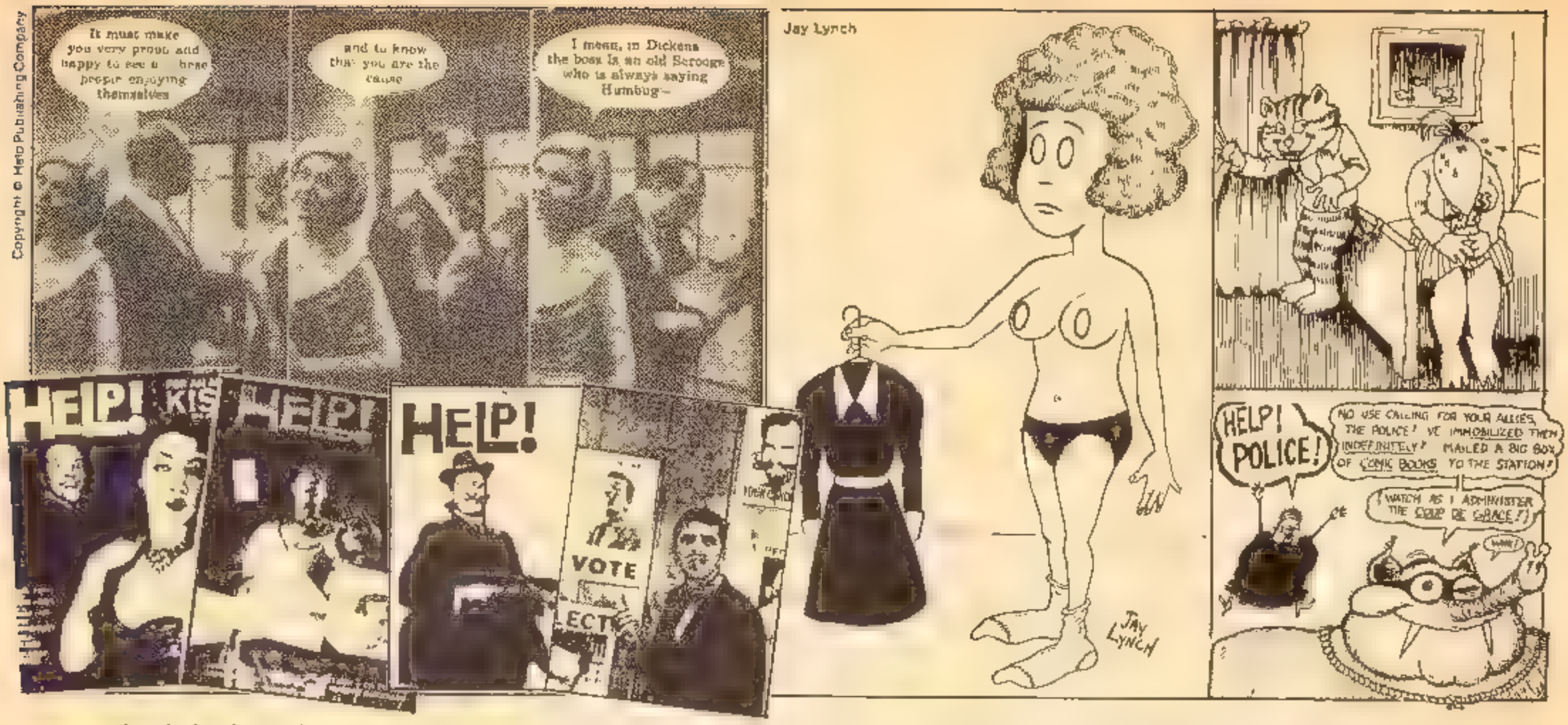
It must make you very proud and happy to see a lot of these people enjoying themselves
and to know that you are the cause
I mean, in Dickens the boss is an old Scrooge who is always saying Humbug—
HELP!
HELP!
HELP!
VOTE
Jay Lynch
HELP! POLICE!
NO USE CALLING FOR YOUR ALLIES, THE POLICE! I'VE IMMOBILIZED THEM INDEFINITELY! MAILED A BIG BOX OF COMIC BOOKS TO THE STATION!
I WATCH AS I ADMINISTER THE COUP DE GRACE!!
JAY LYNCH

A typical melange of material to be found in the old HELP! magazine. Upper left, comedian Milt Kamen appeared in a Mafia parody. Center: a very early drawing by Jay Lynch for HELP!'s "Public Gallery." Upper right: the earliest R. Crumb drawings of Fritz the Cat, and, at lower right, Gilbert Shelton's Wonder Warl-Hog

for magazines in general. Dozens of magazines were collapsing during that period—COLLIER'S and lots of others went down. There were several magazines in financial trouble and the banks came down on Hefner and withdrew their credit. Hefner was having this real terrible problem as a result of the general magazine situation and he had to cut back severely. TRUMP was one of the cuts.

WASSERMAN: And after **TRUMP** folded, you jumped into **HUMBUG** almost immediately?

KURTZMAN: HUMBUG was a very sentimental undertaking. We all sat around the day TRUMP was dropped ... wondering whether to slash our wrists. Arnold Roth was the only one who kept his head about him. I was sitting with Jack Davis and Al Jaffee and Harry Chester and Arnold was the only one who could think constructively. He went down and got some booze. And in our subsequent drunken state, we decided to carry on and we came out with HUMBUG.

WASSERMAN: **TRUMP** was a super-slick effort, obviously intended to be well financed. But **HUMBUG** was different. It retailed for 15 cents and ...

KURTZMAN: HUMBUG was an attempt to work with 15 cents and publish a sensitive cartoon satire magazine. It was a disaster because it wasn't a realistic effort at all. It totally ignored fundamental good business sense. We were carried away by our talent and camaraderie and went ahead with HUMBUG anyway. But I think we turned out some of the most charming stuff that's ever been done. The format was just so bad. It was like a fart in the wind.

It was a teeny-tiny book in black and white. It had nothing going for it except talent—at least that's what we told ourselves. We were satisfied with that, but it wasn't nearly enough.

HELP! AND THE FUMETTI FORMAT

WASSERMAN: Eventually you returned to satire and you and Jim Warren began **HELP!** Financially .

KURTZMAN: Warren and I dealt with each other on a partnership basis. He had been after me for a long time to do something. HELP! was essentially Warren's money and my editing. Jim was fairly active at the time, so we pooled a certain amount of our resources. Jim was very deep into Hollywood photo-type magazines and HELP! was sort of a hybrid.

WASSERMAN: What do you mean hybrid? Was **HELP!** originally slated to be something else?

KURTZMAN: I did a couple of western magazines for Warren on a non-partnership basis, an issue-by-issue basis. That's where I developed this format of using Hollywood photographs to fill pages in a satirical way. That sort of set the pattern for HELP!

WASSERMAN: **HELP!** was basically a fumetti magazine, though, and that originally became popular in Europe . .

KURTZMAN: Yeah, true, a lot of half-tone stuff.

WASSERMAN: **HELP!** never really made it, though, and that's always puzzled me. After all, those fumettis were phenomenally popular in Europe.

KURTZMAN: All kinds of things happen in Europe that just don't work here.

My own longtime conclusion is, that in the business of media, the ramifications of each foreign environment are so complicated it's impossible to explain why something is a big smash success over there and nothing happens over here.

WASSERMAN: Do you think American television could have had some sort of impact on how the fumetti might have done here?

KURTZMAN: It's possible, although the European fumettis were totally different in character. They were real soap-opera stuff and had a much broader base than ours. We did satire, which is never that popular. European fumettis were soap-opera sagas and very often they were a collection of still photographs. They would turn them into a photo-picture story.

WASSERMAN: Rather than putting out a novelization of the movie they would just put out a fumetti of the movie?

KURTZMAN: Yeah, and it was a real broad base kind of entertainment. So that may explain it. They once tried to translate European fumettis and it never worked. They're still very popular in South America, I think.

WASSERMAN: You did pull off two fumettis in **PLAYBOY** a few years back. One was with Michael Pollard and the other was with Tony Randall.

KURTZMAN: Yeah, one was a take-off on BLOW-UP and the other was a spoof on THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY. We called the Pollard one BLOW-OUT and the Randall spaghetti western was called THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE GARLIC.

WASSERMAN: Did they go over well? Was there any particularly large response to them?

KURTZMAN: We got a fairly good amount of reaction. They were very expensive, though. The cost of those things were really incredibly high. I mean it was practically like doing a moving picture. We had all of the property problems of a cheapy movie.

Of all the projects I've ever done, these were the most fun. The second one

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Editor

was a lot better than the first, too. We improved rapidly.

WASSERMAN: Getting back to **HELP!**. In many ways, Warren as a publisher was just as domineering and possessive as Gaines was. Did you have similar problems?

KURTZMAN: It was a totally different situation, luckily. With Warren, it was strictly a partnership basis, and I guarded my half of the partnership very zealously, had a good lawyer, and we were on an equal footing throughout the project.

WASSERMAN: Even though **HELP!** folded after several dozen issues, it was an amazing magazine. There were dozens of unbelievably talented people associated with the magazine.

KURTZMAN: We had a great collection of people. Gloria Steinem was my first assistant. We also worked with a whole galaxy of actors and actresses who went on to great things.

And cartoonists! We worked with Crumb, we worked with Gilbert Shelton. We were the first to publish Fritz the Cat.

WASSERMAN: Wasn't that just something that later evolved into Fritz?

KURTZMAN: No, it was Fritz the Cat. He was a cat and he was Fritz and it was the first version of Fritz the Cat. I forgot exactly how it worked, but that was Fritz the Cat.

But it was just amazing the calibre of people we had on HELP!—Crumb included. There was Gloria Steinem and then Terry Gillian, who later did marvelous animated material for the MONTY PYTHON SHOW. Chuck Alverson was my third outstanding assistant. Chuck's now in to his second book and I understand options on both have been picked up by the movies.

We also used big people for our fumettis and our covers. Just marvelous people. We used Jonathan Winters. We used Dick Van Dyke, Milton Berle, Milt Kamen, Sid Caesar, a whole bunch of very cooperative artists.

We practically used the whole of what developed into the comix underground. You know, we used everybody: Jay Lynch, Skip Williamson, Bob Crumb, Denis Kitchen, Bob Grossman and on and on and on.

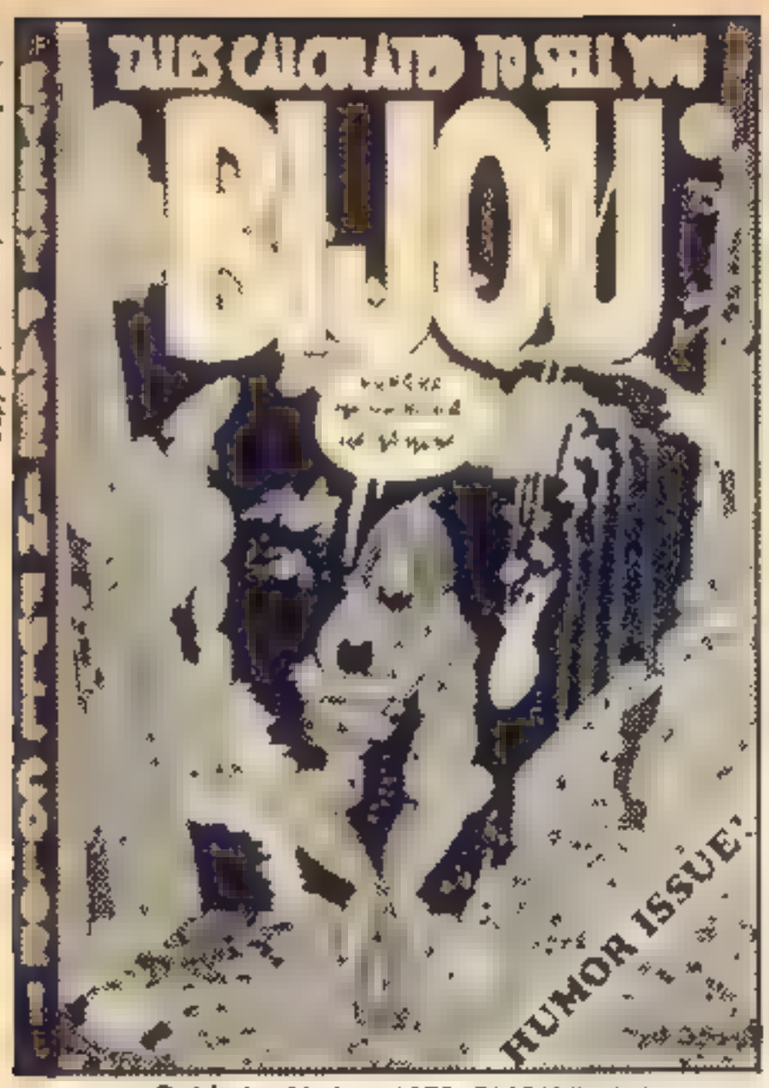
WASSERMAN: Do you then think of yourself as the father of the underground comix?

KURTZMAN: Perhaps the mother ... no, not really. I think there was a connection, though. I still haven't figured out exactly what it was.

Probably the kind of thing HELP! did that underground comix continue to do was "reality stuff." We were really into reality stuff when nobody else was doing reality. I guess that was the bond.

WASSERMAN: What do you mean by "reality stuff"?

KURTZMAN: There are several ways to entertain people. I've always felt there were two ends on the pole of entertainment; on one end is fantasy, the other end is reality. The pendulum swings. Sometimes the people want WIZARD OF OZ and other times they want real-



Published in late 1973, BIJOU #8 (left) sported a Kurtzman cover and the interior was an unabashed tribute to Kurtzman's satiric formulas. SNARF #5 (center), which has just been published, also had a new Kurtzman cover. Meanwhile, Annie kept plugging along with the re-release of her anthology

life. Our underground people wanted reality.

WASSERMAN: How about the new **BIJOU**, though? It's all **MAD** swipes and anything but "reality stuff."

KURTZMAN: Yeah, well, the whole comic book is kind of an inside joke. Crumb is working like Jay Lynch and Lynch is working like Gilbert Shelton and it was a lot of fun to see the book. I don't know if it will be understood. There's so much inside stuff going on.

WASSERMAN: Did you enjoy having this weird sort of tribute?

KURTZMAN: Oh sure, great, terrific, can't get enough of it. We all like to have our egos massaged.

WASSERMAN: Since you won't admit to being the father of underground comix, will you accept mother of the undergrounds?

KURTZMAN: Maybe the sister-in-law or the third cousin. I ...

WASSERMAN: How about brother-in-law? They always seem to fit in much better.

KURTZMAN: Yeah, that's it, I was the brother-in-law. I'm sure the guys will understand.

LITTLE ANNIE FANNIE

WASSERMAN: **LITTLE ANNIE FANNIE** has always been different and seems to be divorced from all your other work.

KURTZMAN: I always liked sex!

WASSERMAN: Well, anyway ... it's been 12 years ...

KURTZMAN: God, is it that long? One loses track of time.

WASSERMAN: Have they been good years with **LITTLE ANNIE FANNIE?**

KURTZMAN: Yes, they've been very good years. I've gotten a very generous fee for the feature. It's probably the most expensive comic strip in the world to produce. The most expensive there ever has, is, or ever will be and it's been a very nice 12 years.

WASSERMAN: How did you convince Hefner to go along with such an expensive comic? I'm sure he realized it would be just a great feature but not a particularly strong circulation builder ...

KURTZMAN: I threw a few ideas at him. I don't remember what they were, but I remember ANNIE FANNIE was one of a series of things I suggested to him and it was one he responded to. He said "Bullseye, that's it."

WASSERMAN: Did your ideas have to be sexually oriented as a prerequisite for **PLAYBOY** magazine? Or would Hugh Hefner have also accepted a truly

KURTZMAN: I never for a second questioned that the ideas be otherwise; of course they'd be sexually oriented. PLAYBOY is a man's magazine, a male magazine with a strong sexual outlook.

WASSERMAN: So you believe that sex had to take at least ...

KURTZMAN: No, not at all. Gahan Wilson's series is totally sexless. I can't remember a single Gahan Wilson sex cartoon. But I never saw myself relating to PLAYBOY without the sex theme. ANNIE FANNIE was totally a sexual creature.

WASSERMAN: As the years have progressed, society has become a little more sexually aware. Have you kept Annie in step with the times?

KURTZMAN: I think we've become a lot more sexually explicit. Annie does a lot more things. Sexual situations that didn't exist before now appear without a second thought. There are certain things in LITTLE ANNIE FANNIE today that wouldn't be in the first adventures. You know, now you can show a woman's crotch—and we do it. An occasional penis now and then ... nobody gets upset about it. We didn't do that at the beginning.

WASSERMAN: In the early days it seemed that the ultimate goal of the stories was to have Little Annie Fannie quite undressed by the end of the adventures.

KURTZMAN: The formula that we set for ourselves was very simple. Annie would come to grips with some aspect of our society and she's react to it much like Candide. She was the bumpkin, the innocent who was the victim of the adventure. Somewhere along the way she gets her clothes lost, torn off, taken off; but she goes—however she goes—nude or partly nude somewhere.

WASSERMAN: Would you say that after 12 years she's lost her innocence?

KURTZMAN: I think she's whatever you want to make her. In my mind, she's an innocent.

Essentially she's supposed to be an innocent, an optimist, a Pollyanna; someone who assumes that everybody believes in good and that there are no evil people. So she's an innocent.

If you're asking me if she gets laid, that's another question.

We know in this day and age it would be very hard to keep a girl in Annie's circumstances a virgin. Secretly we know she's not a virgin, but we don't tell that to the outside world.

WASSERMAN: **LITTLE ANNIE FANNIE** has quite often contained political [illegible] parodies on movies, lampoons and [illegible] material. Which would you put [illegible] the political jibes or straight humor?

KURTZMAN: It's always nice if you do something you think is thoughtful and entertaining at the same time. I get the most satisfaction out of a story that's successful in both areas simultaneously. If it's very entertaining and thoughtful at the same time, that's what I consider a successful story.

WASSERMAN: You're only half of [illegible]'s creative team, and you've been with that other half for a long time. Will Elder strikes me as ...

KURTZMAN: Willie is, I think, one of the funniest cartoonists around and he has a way with humor that's second to nobody. I should really say a couple of words—several hundred words about Willie.

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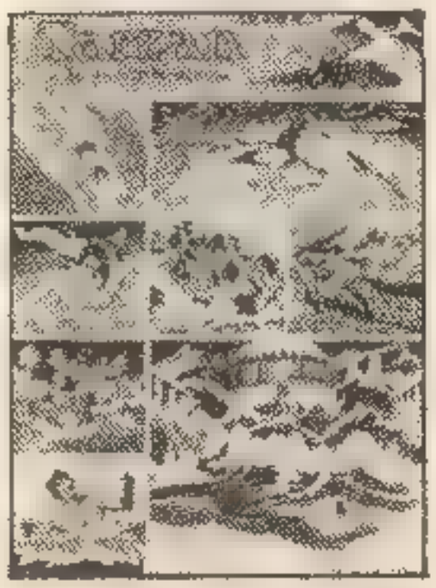

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PLEASE, BENTON...
TWEEE!
LET'S SPLICE OUR SOUND-TRACKS INTO ONE MASTER TAPE...
PLEASE ...NO!
MEAT & POTATOES
LET'S GIVE EVERYTHING A FAST WIPE AND FADE IN WITH A NEW SCENE...
NO! NO! NO! MISTER BATTBARTON!
BOP!

These panels are from the first LITTLE ANNIE FANNIE adventure; they appeared in the October 1962 edition of PLAYBOY.

Will had more to do with establishing the graphic MAD style than anybody else. Will had such a fertile sense of humor ... every time I gave him a story, he'd load the thing up with these chatgas, with these little funny happenings going on in the background. It was all pure Will Elder—that was his style. It was not my style and Will was the one who introduced the busy, busy panel.

WASSERMAN: Did you welcome that to your ...

KURTZMAN: Oh, I loved it. Some of the best stuff we've done is pure, undiluted Will.

ANNIE FANNIE inhibits him a lot now as it inhibits me. There are many things we can't do for various reasons, but he still manages to get an occasional goodie. But I don't think it compares to our old black and white days when we were totally uninhibited and Will was allowed to go crazy with his background details.

I don't think anybody can touch him and I think it was Will who established that zany, crowded style in MAD magazine.

WASSERMAN: Is he hindered because LITTLE ANNIE FANNIE has to be done in color by brush?

KURTZMAN: Yeah, the color gives us problems. You can't crowd color easily. We have enormous design problems doing ANNIE FANNIE. The pure business of making things visible is a hassle. Will and I have the terrible restriction of severe design problems and we have to inhibit ourselves quite a bit.

I mean, how many people are doing full-process color illustration comics? Unfortunately, in losing that crowded stuff that was so easy to do in black and white, we've lost something valuable of Willie's. I'd sure like to see some of the old time stuff.

WASSERMAN: Inhibited artwork aside, is Elder still as crazy as you portray him in your lectures?

KURTZMAN: I never turn my back.

WASSERMAN: Might stab you with a brush?

KURTZMAN: Or hit me with a kneaded eraser. You can never tell.

THE CURRENT SCENE

WASSERMAN: You've said you're terribly excited at some of the developments in European comics. I wonder ...

KURTZMAN: I've been following the French cartoons. In Europe, there's a big cartoon revival and it's most delightful to see. They're doing things that are positively inspiring—publishers and cartoonists both.

Apparently the cartoonists work under some sort of pseudo-star system. They're known not only as drawings, but as people. There's a lot of enthusiasm for cartoons and a lot of competition in cartooning; and, for whatever reason, people are buying lots of cartoon stuff. They're buying cartoon books, cartoon magazines, cartoon everything. The business of cartooning is flourishing in Europe, especially in France.

They're turning out some of the most incredible work you ever saw and this is where I sense the most excitement in the medium. It's something that everybody should have their eye on; it's the way I'd like to see things happen here.

The most significant thing is the star system—people are working for the glory of doing good work and they're working on a modern author/publisher basis. They sell their stuff to the publisher and only give them the first rights. The publisher gives the work back and they have the right to reprint or make collections or whatever. I can't tell you of all the things they are doing. They've got a vast spectrum of activity going on and I would encourage everybody to look into it.

The cartoonist here has been treated like ... I don't want to use a strong word or expression ... I think the cartoonists have been treated badly; he's the low man on the totem pole. In my time, work was turned out—you had no claim, no ownership. You sold your drawings forever, very often for a very, very bad price. Publishers, get this, they would destroy the drawings after they used them.

WASSERMAN: The current method has been to store it. In storing the original artwork, the unfortunate thing is that it provides temptation...

KURTZMAN: Ah, that's nonsense.

WASSERMAN: But it's happening.

KURTZMAN: The cartoon business was always run in a way where the cartoonists just weren't all that important and their long range needs were never thought about. There are few things regarded as valuable by the comic book publisher and his operation. I can assure you that the printer was more fairly treated than the cartoonist. Now that's lopsided. The business of stealing and storing, that's...

WASSERMAN: This is what has evolved out of the system. Not to say that stealing results from keeping original material around but ...

KURTZMAN: It's trouble to take care of artwork. It's trouble and trouble means cost. There were only a few publishers that had any foresight. I think Gaines was one of them. He really took care of artwork and felt something for it.

WASSERMAN: Speaking about costs, though. The idea of just selling first rights to the comic book firms and then keeping reprint rights to yourself is fine, but so much of the comic industry is based on cheap reprint books.

KURTZMAN: Ah, well, that's something recent. Of course, that's a rip-off. The cartoonists should get paid for their work. I mean, these cartoonists are people, they're artists and should be treated as such.

The Mini-Cons That Attacked Southern California!

by Mark Evanier

Illustration by James McGurk

They've come in droves! Dozens of them! "Super Sundays," "First Sundays" and "King Cons!" Never-ending, never ceasing, coming week after week after week. And, like any fad that has taken hold in Southern California, the fans love it!

Predicated on the notion that bigger is not necessarily better, the trend is to the mini convention—one day events, two days at most. Sure, the new think goes, big conventions are great, but they're not without their drawbacks. Drawbacks brought on by their often unwieldy length.

At three or four-day conventions -or even a five-day blockbuster like 1973's New York Comic Art Convention—the closing days can become an endurance contest, not just of finances, but also of physical survival. No fan worth his weight in price guides will get any notable amount of shut-eye at a convention and by the last day, the whole affair seems to have slowed from 45 rpm to 33⅓. There is also something distinctly pathetic about watching the dealers room slowly disintegrate as the convention heads for its inevitable conclusion.

But, at these quickly proliferating one day conventions, there is no need for sleeping, thus saving already precarious fannish health—not to mention lowering omnipresent hotel costs. The smaller convention can go the distance without slackening the pace, and there is ample time to survey the dealers room and every outrageously priced nook and outlandishly priced cranny therein.

"When I get to a big convention," said one attendee of a recent one-day fanfave, "I make a quick sweep of the dealers room to snatch up any obvious bargains. Then, I usually don't do much buying until the last day—just before I'm going to leave and some prices may have gone down. Cons like this one compress a whole three day con into one afternoon. I buy just as much and the prices have been bette

Other enthusiasts of one-day conventions are saying things like "This is the future of cons," and "I've never gotten such bargains!"

Greg Koudoulian, who founded and runs the First Sunday Club, explained

the how and why of the new-found bargain prices: "A lot of dealers we get aren't dealers. They're just fans with stuff to sell. But they don't want to shell out 50 bucks for a table at a big con and then have to sit behind it for four, five days to unload their stock. The overhead is less."

Koudoulian charges $5 for a table at his one day meetings. This remains a rather sane alternative to the $60 charge being asked for the upcoming, six-day San Diego Convention. At the $60 rate, no dealer can afford to bother with nickel and-dime bargain comics. But, when paying only the $5 charge for exhibition space, there is no pressure on the huckster to pad prices to recoup his table fee.

"Everybody makes back the cost of the table in his first hour or so," Koudoulian said recently.

Koudoulian's First Sunday Club was the first series of mini conventions in recent Southern California fan history. Once a popular event, especially in Los Angeles, the mini-cons died out and no one took the necessary initiative to revive them until Koudoulian stepped in late in 1973.

I heard about the Second Sunday cons in New York," Koudoulian said at a recent convention, "and about the other cons in other cities. And everyone knew that Los Angeles should have something like that. The business of buying old comics started in L.A."

So on November 4, 1973, the First Sunday Club held its first monthly meeting at the Hollywood Woman's Club, just a few blocks from Hollywood Boulevard and the Chinese Theater. Some 30 dealers and several hundred fans turned out for the pioneer gathering, most encouraged by the paltry $1 admission charge. Since that first meeting, attendance and demand for dealer space has swelled and Koudoulian has moved his operation to the plush Americana Hotel in Culver City.

At the First Sunday Club's last Hollywood assembly on March 3rd, special guest Jack Kirby helped draw a record attendance. Ray Bradbury put in an unscheduled appearance at that last First Sunday meet in the Woman's Club and stayed for an hour. Bradbury, who doesn't drive, left his taxi ticking away in the parking lot. That's class! Or a terrible comment about taxi service in L.A.

It was inevitable that Koudoulian's success spawn imitators, and it wasn't long before other similar mini-cons began sprouting. Shortly after Koudoulian began his group, two local comic dealers announced plans for a "Super Sunday" convention at intermittent intervals. David Alexander and Terry Stroud, who run the American Comic Book Club, secured the Sheraton-Universal Hotel for their meetings. (The Sheraton-Universal had previously become nationally famous due to the negative notoriety Johnny Carson has heaped on it he's called it "The Sheraton-Unusual, among other things.) The facilities are quite nice and no one has yet complained about the socio-political implications of patronizing an ITT affiliate.

Like the First Sunday Club, the Alexander/Stroud function charges $1 for admission, but dealers tables are $10 as opposed to Koudoulian's $5 charge. Regardless, the hucksters turn out in full force and the Super Sunday dealers room is often better stocked than most larger conventions. Like Koudoulian's group, the Second Sunday gatherings

offer films—usually a program of movie serial chapters, cartoons, comedy shorts and science fiction flicks

Unlike First Sunday Club meetings, however, the Super Sundays usually shun the notion of formally-announced special guests. Not to say they didn't try it, though.

In promoting their meeting for this past February 10th, the American Comic Book people advertised the attendance of Alex Toth and Geri Glass, **PLAYBOY**'s gatefold girl for the previous September.

"Geri has never attended a comic book convention and she tells us she is excited about seeing the many rare items on display," was the way one promotion flyer read. "She will be at the American Comic Book Company's tables selling the most valuable golden age comics and signing autographs for her many fans."

After that (Super) Sunday was over, Miss September still hadn't been to a comic convention ... she didn't make the gathering. Nor did Alex Toth. Luckily, Russell Myers, Sergio Aragones, Mike Royer, Walter Koenig and Harlan Ellison did drop by unannounced. None of them were as pretty as Glass, admittedly, but they all drew, wrote or acted better. And they were all fully clad, for better or worse.

This past February was a hectic one for comic fans in any event. The first Sunday of the month brought—you were expecting maybe Hugh Hefner—the First Sunday Club. The second Sunday was set aside for the Glass-less Super Sunday at the Sheraton-Universal.

And on the third weekend of the month there came the King Kon in San Diego—a two-day mini-convention under the auspices of Shel Dorf and Ken Krueger, who are among the directors of the annual San Diego Convention. Admission for the two-day King Kon was $2 in advance or $4 at the door, but table space ran considerably higher: $20 in advance or $25 at the door. Whereas both the First Sunday gatherings and Super Sunday meetings had been considered unqualified successes, King Kon was met with only mixed reactions.

San Diego, being only 126 miles from Los Angeles, has always relied heavily on commuting fans to support their fannish endeavors. Whether because of the gas shortage or the over-saturation of similar conventions, King Kon ended with many dealers disgruntled and audibly disappointed at the sales and general turn-out.

King Kon, two days in length, also seemed to strike an unsatisfactory compromise between the one-day and the full-scale convention. It had the disadvantages of both cons and the advantages of neither. All-night movies were a significant feature of the convention—but that would only force any interested fans and dealers to spend money for hotel rooms. And if that wasn't bad enough, anyone so inclined had to make his own arrangements—the convention staff had neglected to secure a hotel.

But while most attendees chose not to stay on for the movie showing, Dorf said the program was quite successful—catering to the San Diego audience.

"They really went for the films," Dorf explained while manning his table at the following First Sunday gathering. "I found myself running the projector at six in the morning for a group of people who were enjoying every minute. An awful lot of them had never been to a con before."

And Dorf's remarks rang true. Most of the First Sunday Club's attendees seemed like novices to the world of fandom and conventions, possibly comic books readers who had previously been frightened away by large, imposing conventions.

Nevertheless, Dorf is hoping to continue the King Kon series, possibly in a modified format. In addition, he is planning for the forthcoming six-day San Diego Convention which will run from July 31st through August 5th.

Many local fans who have become accustomed to the rash of mini-cons are now horrified at the notion of six consecutive days of conventioning. One of them, scanning the impressive lists of guests and special features at the upcoming San Diego conclave, gasped in a Graham Ingels manner; after mentally tabulating the equally mammoth hotel tab, he gasped again ... louder.

Perhaps the upcoming San Diego fanfare seems extreme in light of the recent re-discovery of the one-day affair, which has reoriented fandom into smaller groupings. The $60 table rate will no doubt rule out the smaller dealers and once again bring on the curse of blatant commercialism that has been so rampant at recent large conventions. It will no doubt be a fine convention, but it will lack the quiet intimacy the short conventions have reintroduced to Southern California fandom.

The six-day convention in San Diego—and the impending Independence Day New York Convention—nothwithstanding, the one-day convention may well be the wave of the future. They are already in evidence in other cities. Seuling's Second Sunday has given way to the monthly Comic Book Marketplace and a half-dozen other cities hold regularly scheduled gatherings. In England, the large convention has never been all that popular, and the convention scene consists strictly of one-day affairs.

This past March 21st Graceland College in Lamoni, Iowa hosted the Lamoni-Con—Lamoni being 79 miles south of Des Moines, as the crow flies.

And if Lamoni, Iowa—population 2,502—can host a convention, is the outbreak of small, regional gatherings far in the future? If these mini-cons are the shape of things to come, it may be a reaffirmation of the fellowship of fandom—a fellowship which often seems to be rapidly evaporating at the hands of those monstrously long and impersonal super-conventions. □

Among the montage of mini-con mayhem is Jack Kirby (bottom right), Shel Dorf (behind and to the left of Kirby, and Greg Koudoulian (bottom, second from left)

INSIDE BOOKS

THE COMIC-STRIPPED AMERICAN
by Arthur Asa Berger
Walker and Company, $7.95

Arthur Asa Berger's **THE COMIC-STRIPPED AMERICAN** purports to tell us "what Dick Tracy, Blondie, Daddy Warbucks and Charlie Brown tell us about ourselves." But, in the course of this terribly-titled 225-page tome, the author commits the common academic crime of telling more than he knows—about the comics, about us and about his own studied self.

Concentrating more on syndicated strips than comic books, Berger—a professor of pop culture at San Francisco State University—apparently feels defensive about his subject matter, and the resultant anxiety drive him on to greater and greater heights of dizzying pretention as the book worms its weary way to its far-gone conclusion. His final chapter, "Mr. Natural and His Friends from the Underground," reaches realms of inaccuracy and condescension that are not to be believed.

To give Berger his due, earlier chapters on the **YELLOW KID**, the **KATZ-**

ENJAMMER KIDS and George Herriman's surreal **KRAZY KAT** are, as the academics say, not without interest. While most of his observations are obvious enough, they do succeed in putting those strips in some socio-historical perspective for those of us reading them out of their original contexts. But Berger exhibits less perception when trying to relate contemporary strips to the society they reflect (though a good many daily strips, like **BLONDIE** and **LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE**, continue to reflect ages that have long since passed). For the most part, the author follows the tedious dictum of kitsch as kitsch can.

Those early chapters, however, are the best part of this heavy-handed, irritating treatise. Particularly tiresome is the author's term paper-like tendency to back up even the most banal observations with quotes from more celebrated thinkers making the same points in other (and generally better) words. He frequently cites Marshall McLuhan, which is strange, since this only serves to point out that the head on McLuhan's shoulders is infinitely more original, perceptive and interesting than Berger's. And for all Berger's flights of unlikely fancy, you'd be a lot better off reading the comics section of McLuhan's **UNDERSTANDING MEDIA** than you would reading **THE COMIC-STRIPPED AMERICAN**. Many of the "insights" that seem so hard-won here are intuitively understood by more pedestrian comic readers—and they don't have to resort to consulting Webster's, McLuhan or Winthrop Frye to appreciate them.

Berger also suffers from an ingrained academic distance that is often staggering to behold. After making the less than-brilliant point that we need to identify with the grandiose exploits of comic book heroes because we yearn for, but lack, such soul-stirring adventures in our own lives, Berger blandly states that "polls are taken in America to suggest that large numbers of people here are leading lives of quiet desperation for one reason or another." Not only does he neglect to set Thoreau's "quiet desperation" in quotes, he has to study polls and charts and graphs to realize that "large numbers" of natives are understandably restless here. I guess that restlessness hasn't hit the Pop Culture Department of San Francisco State College yet.

Reflecting again upon the vicarious nature of the strips, Berger deduces that: "Perhaps we have reached the stage in which we live vicariously through Snoopy—and all the other characters in the strip. This is the ultimate inversion—a multitude of lifeless (in the sense of being de-energized and neurasthenic) and mute humans leading a kind of vicarious existence in the lives of comic strip characters ... as well as through other entertainments offered by the mass media."

As Snoopy himself might put it, "Yawn!"—or perhaps even "Z!" It's enough to make you want to reach out and pinch Berger's diploma to see if he's really awake. It could have been worse, however. He **might** have paused to give us the definition of "neurasthenic."

And on it goes with no end in sight. After spending several uninspired pages analyzing Clark Kent/Superman's "di-

Superman is a middle class square!"

vided self," Berger is moved to proclaim that "In many respects Superman is a middle-class square!" So why the exclamation point? Was there ever any doubt? Is it so remarkable that a comic strip designed to entertain an audience comprised mostly of middle-class squares features a hero who's basically just a gross exaggeration of the existing middle-class male ideal? No! Yes! Whatever!

Also in evidence is Berger's uncommon knack for missing at least as many points as he makes. In his chapter on "eroticomics" of the **BARBARELLA** ilk, for example, he decides that "eroticomics are, in essence, quite conscience-ridden. They reflect a fundamental and rather crushing anxiety that is hidden by their manifest content. They are, then, very Puritannical! But don't tell that to the censors."

Such a revelation would not cut ice with the censor mentality, however. **REEFER MADNESS**, a 1938 right-wing, anti-dope and anti-sex film, proposed that the intake of marijuana leads directly to illicit sex, insanity, murder and the gas chamber. Usually in that order. But the film was still placed on the Roman Catholic Legion of Decency "condemned" list. The point about censors—which Berger misses—is that they don't much care whether or not you approve of your sordid subject matter; just suggesting that it even **exists** is sufficient crime enough.

But nowhere is **THE COMIC-STRIPPED AMERICAN** more maddening than in the chapter devoted to underground comix, where Berger's powers of misinterpretation really reach full flower. He apparently decides underground comix were products not of individual artist/satirists, but of "countercultural revolutionaries" who wanted only to shock the bourgeoisie in any way they could, usually with lewd depictions of "oppressive" and "supersaturated" sexuality indulged in by "dope fiends"

and "kooky gurus," which are really (aha!) expressing a poorly veiled "neo-Puritanism." Und zo, you should be zeeing zat it iss very hard to be putting anyzing past Herr Professor.

Berger also gives no evidence that he understands the associational dream logic employed by many underground cartoonists, complaining instead that the stories are "frequently without endings, development or anything structural." In need of a fitting summarization for his chapter on these dope-devouring primitives, Berger posits that, "Perhaps Mr. Natural and Trashman are symbolic heroes who represent, in vague ways, infantile disorders of the cerebellum and the crotch. Both are comic figures, both parody heroic types (the guru and the superhero), and both tell us a great deal more than they think about both the counterculture and our so-called straight culture." The important phrase is "in vague ways." No wonder a poor, semi-articulate, kooky guru like R. Crumb dropped his pencil and headed for the hills.

Incidentally, in addition to providing innumerable critical gems for readers to rage at or chuckle over, **THE COMIC-STRIPPED AMERICAN** is a virtual goldmine for inveterate typo-hunters, with winners like "Jack Kibby" for Jack Kirby and "morality rate" for mortality rate. Apparently, the typesetters and proofreaders had as much difficulty paying attention to this book as I did.

By Any Other Name Department: Prof. Berger also takes great pleasure in analyzing the names of comic strip characters. Of Dagwood Bumstead, Mr. Berger decides that, "His name is absurd, the name of an irrelevant person, a clown. Bumstead is silly: perhaps it is close to bump and to lump, which suggests, perhaps, **lumpenproletariat**. Bum also means tramp and rear end, neither of which are flattering."

But then the name Arthur Asa Berger also yields several curious and, perhaps, telling possibilities. Arthur, of course, suggests "author" and, as such, is a fitting name for one who has written a book. But Asa can indicate either "ace" (positive) or "ass" (negative). And Berger sounds suspiciously like "burger," as in hamburger, more specifically associated with cheap, heavy, fast-food hamburgers—the kind that are easy to bite into but very difficult to swallow and almost impossible to digest.

Which pretty much describes this book.

—**Joe Kane**

THE COMIC-BOOK BOOK
Edited by Don Thompson and Dick Lupoff
Arlington House, $8.95

Some years back, a planned publication date was announced for a book called **ALL IN COLOR FOR A DIME**, loosely based on the fanzine series of the same name. The announced date passed with no book released, so another publication date was announced. And another and another. It became a running gag in Hollywood bookshops to inquire about it, somewhat akin to waiting for Godot. One store had been taking advance orders for an embarrassing number of months.

To everyone's surprise, said book finally materialized—to mixed reaction. Among the milder complaints: several important, colorful topics had been given hurried, colorless attention and the book lacked coherence of any sort. As for the less mild gripes: the aforementioned bookshop bought a full page fanzine ad and apologized for selling **ALL IN COLOR FOR A DIME**. They offered refunds to any customers who so desired. The book was also scored for its wretched cover, badly-selected and wholly useless center section of color plates and its incredibly outrageous [illegible]

Those flaws notwithstanding, **ALL IN COLOR FOR A DIME** had much of interest and it may have been the long, long drum-roll that fostered such negative reaction. Nevertheless, when the

editors of **AICFAD** announced a sequal, **THE COMIC-BOOK BOOK**, most every one adopted an "I'll believe it when I see it" attitude.

THE COMIC-BOOK BOOK is out, it is for real. You can go into a store and buy an actual, tangible copy. Or you can wait for those Arlington House advertisements that will undoubtably sell the book for a pittance as a loss-leader introduction to the Nostalgia Book Club.

Either way, it is probably worth the cash outlay as **THE COMIC-BOOK BOOK** is a vast improvement over its predecessor volume, though the sequal is much longer and paper costs have sky-rocketed, the book is less expensive than **AICFAD**, owing mainly to the elimination of color plates. There are illustrations. However, most of them are either muddy, mis-captioned or both. (Someone can't tell John Carter from Tarzan.) And the new book narrows its subject matter to concentrate on a few topics and to treat them with a fair degree of thoroughness. (In **AICFAD**, the history of Superman **and** Batman was dispatched in a paltry 20 pages.)

Funny animal comics, heretofore snubbed by most historians, receive due notice in two fine chapters by Bill Blackbeard and Mike Barrier. Writing about Floyd Gottfredson's **MICKEY MOUSE** newspaper strip and Carl Barks' **DONALD DUCK** and **UNCLE SCROOGE** comics respectively, both authors pay fitting tribute to long-[illegible]ected craftsmen. The entire book is [illegible]ted to Barks, and Blackbeard has unearthed many previously unknown facts about the **MICKEY MOUSE** strip.

Other chapters deal with Jack Cole's **PLASTIC MAN** (able recalled by Don Thompson), Dick Briefer's **FRANKENSTEIN** (Don Glut), Tarzan and Tarzan [illegible]gates (Camille Cazedessus), Will Eisner's **SPIRIT** (Maggie Thompson) and "second banana heroes" (Ron Goulart). Dick Lupoff contributes two fine chapters on airborne heroes of the Airboy and Blackhawk ilk. In addition, there are articles on super-females by Juanita Coulson, on magical heroes by Dick O'Donnell and on radio adventures by Chris Steinbrunner.

One chapter, however, is annoying in its incompetence. Written by co-editor Don Thompson, it covers EC's heyday and draws heavily on Frank Jacobs' recent biography of William M. Gaines. What with renewed interest in the old EC books, such a chapter was probably deemed necessary to bolster sales—but it is far too short and has nothing new to say. In addition, it not only repeats errors from the Jacobs book but makes entirely new ones.

Thompson says, repeating Jacobs' echoing of a famous myth, "Feldstein and Gaines would hash out story ideas and Feldstein would write them—a story a day, every day, five days a week Not to belittle Feldstein's considerable abilities but had he been producing at that rate, he would have been writing **three** stories to every **one** that was printed. thompson also states—as Jacob implies—that Feldstein wrote every issue of the **MAD** companion magazine, **PANIC**. (Most were written by Jack Mendelsohn.)

As for new errata, Thompson says that Bill Gaines was "named publisher of DC's comic line" in 1972, a fact which will surely surprise Gaines. To say nothing of Publisher Carmine Infantino.

More importantly, the chapter—though directed at the EC layman—fails to impart any of the glamour or uniqueness of EC; unlike most of the other chapters, it fails to recapture any of the atmosphere, any semblance of what makes the comics in question worthy of remembrance.

One last point about this generally successful book—the introduction contains a statement more curious than just about anything in the book. Like Feldstein's fabled story-a-day, it makes for good reading but seems mathematically fraudulent. "There is statistical evidence," the statement reads, "that even in this latter day of domination by television, well over 90 per cent of American children still read comic books, and—perhaps more surprising-

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ly—approximately 50 per cent— of American **adults** do the same."

If indeed, there is such statistical evidence, it would come as a shock to an industry that is unable to sell even a measly half million copies of its best-selling titles. An explanation is in order.

Maybe the authors who produced **THE COMIC-BOOK BOOK** love comic books (the good ones, mostly defunct) but **half** of all **American adults**?

Somehow, I can't picture 4½ members of the Supreme Court reading **MARVEL TEAM-UP!**

—Mark Evanier

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A Barry Smith Conan illustration used to show "slow timing" in MOVIE MAKING ILLUSTRATED.

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In **THE GREAT COMIC BOOK HEROES**, Jules Feiffer called that the ultimate dream of artists in the so-called Golden Age of Comics. Since then, comics have matured and improved in many ways and that ideal has come close to realization.

Those artists generally considered great innovators of the form are, by and large, those who are the most consciously "cinematic" in their approach. Will Eisner's **THE SPIRIT** was the first to translate many of the more outre cinematic devices to ink on-paper with his odd angles and unusual panel breakdowns. In interviews, Eisner has credited movies with being his primary influence.

Harvey Kurtzman and Bernie Krigstein extended this approach. Kurtzman achieved a kind of "filmic realism" in his EC war comics, while Krigstein broke up the standard six or seven panels to a page format, sometimes using twenty panels on a page to give the story a quick-cut montage feel.

More recently, one can point to Jim Steranko, Neal Adams and Alex Toth as artists who have made particularly successful use of the visual storytelling devices developed by filmmakers. And the stylistic exchange has gone the other way, too; important film directors like Welles and Fellini have credited comic books as an influence

But the parallels with movies do not apply only to the odd effects and breakdowns utilized by those experimenters who have been dubbed cinematic. Virtually every graphic story technique has a film analog in camerawork or editing. Even the most ordinary-looking comic book story can be analyzed in filmmaker's terms; therein lies the genesis of this fascinating book.

MOVIEMAKING ILLUSTRATED is a visual textbook which teaches basic film methods, using panels and sequences from comic books to illustrate each point. (It should be said here that the authors are not comics enthusiasts and the book is not intended for the comic fan market. It is designed for introductory film courses at the high school and college levels. And while I make no claim to be a film specialist, I can say that I found the book a fascinating short course in film, sure to come in handy the next time **CITIZEN KANE** pops up on the late show.)

But it is not merely the fact that comics are employed as a teaching device that will interest the real comics fan, however. When someone steeped in comics reads it, the thrust of the book is reversed; it becomes a discussion of the graphic story technique in cinematic terms. Thus it is the only systematic technical treatment of the way comic book stories are put together, even though it was not intended as such. Would-be comic artists and students of the form ought to find it a useful tool in understanding just what it is they are trying to do when they put those drawing-filled boxes down on the page and try to tell a story with them.

The camera techniques are discussed first: zooms, pans, low- and high-angle shots, long-shots, close-ups, two shots, tracking shots, wide angles, frames and the like. Each has its comic book counterpart; the explanatory captions are helpful, but this is a **visual** text, and the well-chosen art examples tell the story by themselves.

Lighting techniques are next: silhouettes, key lights, rim lights, etc. Most of these things, of course, are taught to comic artists in books on illustration, but in somewhat different terms; looking at these techniques as a film student provides a fresh approach.

Camerawork corresponds primarily to the art within a single panel; but it is the **sequence** of panels that makes comics unique, and this is where the film analogy is particularly enlightening, and the standard art text of little use. Panel breakdown corresponds to film editing: quick-cutting, jump-cutting, parallel cutting, scene transitions, sequence timing, montage. It is worth noting that these editing devices were almost certainly used unconsciously by established artists, working from experience and instinct, **not** thinking in movie terms as they laid out the panels. But the inexperienced artist will find it most useful to consider films, as they are really the only source of instruction in the technique **storytelling**, apart from comic books themselves.

Other aspects of filmmaking are also discussed: exposure, sound mixing, special effects, acting, makeup and the like. These things do not have precise parallels with comics (comic book sound, for instance, is **sui generis**), and the authors occasionally have to stretch things a bit and doctor a panel here and there to make their point.

MOVIEMAKING ILLUSTRATED is both a how-to and a how not-to make films, and the authors have found the inevitable artist bloopers to illustrate things like continuity fluffs (a Ditko monster has its right arm raised in one panel, its left in the next) and confusing changes in angle and direction (at least moviemakers don't have to worry about the two right hands and three arms that occasionally pop up in comic books).

All the illustrations in the book's 150 pages are taken from Marvel comics dated 1969-1972, including reprints. It is an eclectic selection, to say the least; from Smith and Colan to Reinman and Ayers. It is unfortunate that the authors didn't search Marvel's output more carefully and use some of the truly exciting cinematic artwork of Steranko's **S.H.I.E.L.D.** or Adams' **X-MEN**, for example. Or explain Wally Wood's face-shading gimmick in terms of film lighting. And for nearly every art example chosen, the comics fan with a good memory can probably think of a better one (at least better drawn), but perhaps that's quibbling.

Someday, hopefully, someone who knows comics will do an illustrated text on graphic story form and technique. Comics are not really movies on paper; the two media are as different as they are similar. The comic book is a **unique** storytelling form, after all.

But, there is a lot to be learned by studying the parallels between films and comics, and this book is an excellent place to start.

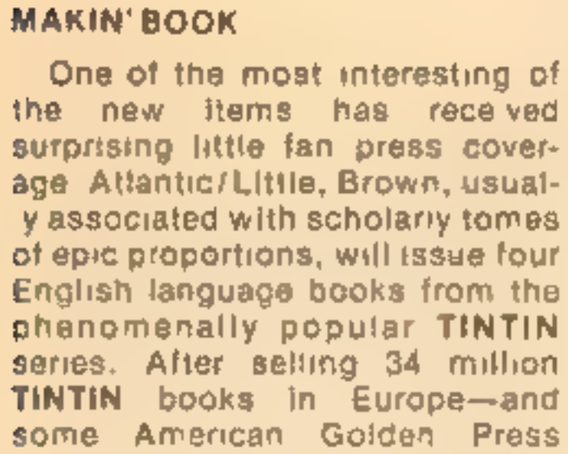
—Art Scott

THE COMIC CONSUMER

Edited by Henry Anton

MAKIN' BOOK

One of the most interesting of the new items has received surprising little fan press coverage. Atlantic/Little, Brown, usually associated with scholarly tomes of epic proportions, will issue four English language books from the phenomenally popular **TINTIN** series. After selling 34 million **TINTIN** books in Europe—and some American Golden Press editions—this will be the first adult American publication of Tintin and Snowy. The books—**THE CRAB WITH THE GOLDEN CLAWS, KING OTTOKAR'S SCEPTER, THE SECRET OF THE UNICORN** and **RED RACKHAM'S TREASURE**—are drawn by



Georges Remil and should be in better bookstores by June. Each volume is paperbound and costs $1.95.

The already controversial **HISTORY OF THE UNDERGROUND COMICS** will finally be published by Straight Arrow Press late in May. Written by Mark James Estren, many who have seen the galleys claim the book is factually inaccurate and terribly shallow. Others have been effusive in their praise. In any event, the book will be published as a $9.95 paperback.

AMERICANA IN FOUR COLORS, an updated version of the 1964 book of the same name was scheduled for April release. Written and revised by John L. Goldwater, Archie mogul and president of the Comic Magazine Association of America (CMAA), the book is subtitled "Twenty Years of Self-Regulation by the Comics Magazine Industry." The book was finally published in mid-May. The cost is $1.00, but the book is smaller than its 1964 predecessor. Copies can be purchased from the CMAA at their new address: 41 E. 42 St., NYC.

The long-awaited King Features books, **PRINCE VALIANT** and **FLASH GORDON**, are now scheduled for June release. Originally stated for Christmas, 1973 publication, the books are now $12.95 per copy and are each 160 pages in full color. □

GUERILLA WAR?

The usually reliable Stan Blair and his National Central Bureau (NCB) seem to be out to surpress a dealer rating fanzine proposed by Larry Friedman of Flushing, New York.

In the 54th issue of **THE BUYER'S GUIDE** a small classified from Friedman announced publication of a magazine that would publish fans' comments about dealers' service. "Don't forget to send in your opinions of the dealers. I will use ANY or ALL comments in my dealer's ratings. Send all comments GOOD or BAD," said the classified.

That was apparently enough to set off certain members of Blair's group. Taking umbrage at the potential publication, Blair zipped off a letter to Friedman, dated March 26th and loaded down with dubious quasi-legal pyrotechnics, the letter said in part:

"National Central Bureau, in and for several dealers ... has been requested to make inquiry concerning your proposed publication in which dealers will be rated in accordance to the comments or statements submitted by fans...

Such information should be in affidavit form for the benefit of any dealer who may take exception to such rating and comments, either under the libel or slander laws as they are presently interpreted."

Now comes National Central Central Bureau, by its director, Stanley R. Blair, as attorney-in-fact for JOHN DOE, RICHARD Roe ET AL with request for answer to this inquiry within TWENTY DAYS from the date of said request."

Blair signed the letter "As

Attorney-in-Fact for JOHN DOE, RICHARD ROE ET AL dealers."

We're not arguing Blair's impressive credentials as "guardian" of fan and dealer rights. We are concerned, however, that all his legalistic gyrations—not all of them accurate—are not aimed at insuring fairness, rather, it seems that he's being pressured by dealers hiding behind "John Doe and Richard Roe" to surpress any possible performance rating magazine.

There's no doubt that Friedman's proposed publication should take great care to document any complaints against dealers. He should endeavor to check and double-check all information he has in order to make his publication as viable and error free as possible.

But Blair should be above threatening legal actions under slander laws—which are not even applicable to the written word. Not to mention that libel can **only** be committed by malicious untruth. And you'd be hard pressed to prove that a fan who feels he's been ripped-off has the capability or intent of being maliciously untrue.

We're not endorsing Friedman's actions or fanzine—not until we know exactly how he'll produce his magazine. But we don't like Blair's guerilla warfare tactics in trying to surpress a potentially useful magazine. As Administrator of the highly-respected NCB, he should be advising Friedman on the best and most responsible methods of producing the magazine—not trying to scare him off with a potpourri of Casey Stengelisms. □

PRESS CLIPS

SATURDAY REVIEW/WORLD for April 9, 1974 (vol. 1, no. 13) carried an article by Lively Arts Editor Hollis Alpert about animated cartoonist Ralph Bakshi. The piece focused on his upcoming cartoon, **COONSKIN**, and the magazine's cover was drawn by Bakshi. Back issues are available for $1 from **SR/W**, 488 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022.

THE NEW INGENUE for February, 1974 explained how to make "comic strip wallpaper" from comic strip and comic book pages. It's actually an intriguing idea and will probably be popular with the magazine's young, teen-aged girl audience. One interesting instruction exhorted the reader to use "satiric strips from **THE NATIONAL LAMPOON**." Just coincidentally, Twenty-First Century Communications owns both **THE NEW INGENUE** and **NATLAMP**. In any event, inquire about back issues at: 635 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022.

NEW TIMES for March 8, 1974 (vol. 2, no. 3) carried a color cover by Joe Orlando, picturing the character "Gasman." Inquire about back issues at: One Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016.

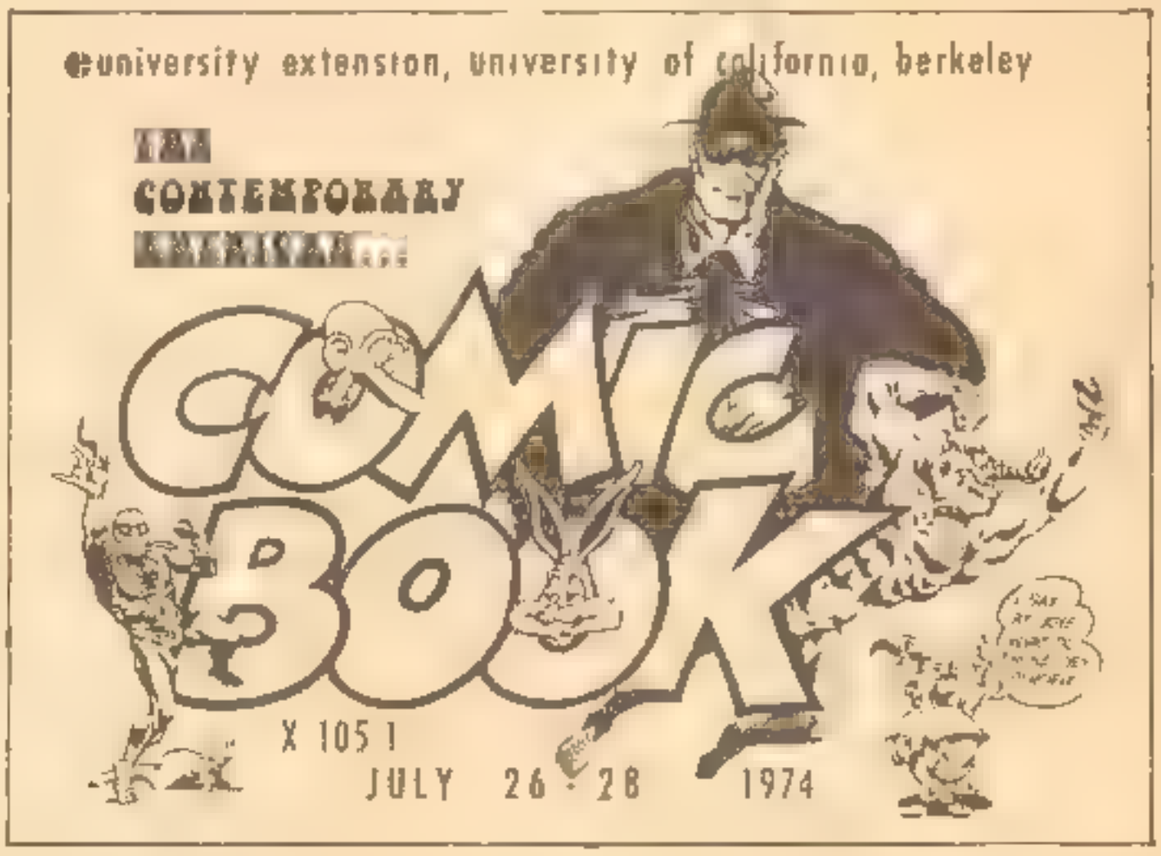
NEW TIMES for March 22, 1974 (vol. 2, no. 6) carried an article entitled "Superheroes Invade Watergate," which reproduced panels from **KAMANDI** and **CAPTAIN AMERICA** in full color.

NEW TIMES (this is getting repetitious) for April 5, 1974 (vol. 2, no. 7) published an article by Stuart Werbin on **WOODY WOODPECKER** animator Walter Lantz. Lantz blasts present-day animation techniques in general and Hanna/Barbara studios in particular.

ROLLING STONE for April 25, 1975 (no. 159) ran a long feature on James Warren and the Warren Publishing Company. Written by an obviously over-matched April Smith, Warren turned the article, entitled "Citizen Pain," into a personal joke. Ms. Smith apparently couldn't tell when Warren was snowing her and when he was telling the truth. Back issues from 625 Third Ave., S.F., Ca. 94707.

MILLIMETER for March 1974 (vol. 2, no. 3) carried several stories on animation. Back issues from **MILLIMETER**, 12 E. 46 St., New York, N.Y. 10017.

THE NEW YORK TIMES MAGAZINE for May 5, 1974 ran a long article by John Culhane entitled, "Leapin' Lizards! What's happening to the comics?" Back issues from: **THE NEW YORK TIMES**, 229 W. 43 St., New York, N.Y. 10036. □



COMIC BOOK COLLEGE

Clay Geerdes, noted underground historian, will be conducting a three-day seminar entitled "The Contemporary American Comic Book" at the University of California at Berkeley. Running from July 26 through July 28, the seminar will be worth two credits in UC's English Department.

Guests include Dick Lupoff, Don Aulf, Lee Marrs, Shelby Sampson, Tom Andrea and Mike Friedrich. There will also be a "historical exhibition of Sunday pages and golden age comics" by Bob Beerbohn.

Information for the course can be obtained through UC's English Department or directly from Geerdes at: 915 Indian Rock Ave., Berkeley, Ca. 94707.

COCHRAN STRIKES AGAIN

Russ Cochran that owa physics eacher turned comic art pub isher, back again with the third issue of **GRAPHIC GALLERY.**

This third issue, which contains 68 pages of art for sale, contains ess for-bid items than before Among the tems up for auction are three Carl Barks pa ntings, a V rgil Finlay pa nting, a Hogarth page and severa. sma ler items Unfortunately, the April 30th deadline will undoubtably have passed by the t me you read this

However, there are dozens of other items available at a sel price

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with no closing deadlines Included in this batch are several **KRAZY KAT** Sundays, a half dozen Wolverton pecul ar people,' Carl Barks artwork Hal Foster **PRINCE VALIANT** Sundays and many others

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The prices are outrageous y high (250 for an only mediocre Wilhamson/Frazetta Flash Gordon drawing $1 200 for a Mickey Mouse mode sheet and $850 for an A ex Raymond pencil draw ng from 1945) but there are some leg timate good buys—not to mention that Cochran is the only game in town for the serious comic art collector

ssue #3 is $5, and an airmail subscr ption to the next two issues s $9 We recommend **GRAPHIC GALLERY** to everyone—if you can t afford to buy the advertised artwork at least you can look at it reproduced here Order from Russ Cochran, Route One, Adel owa 50003

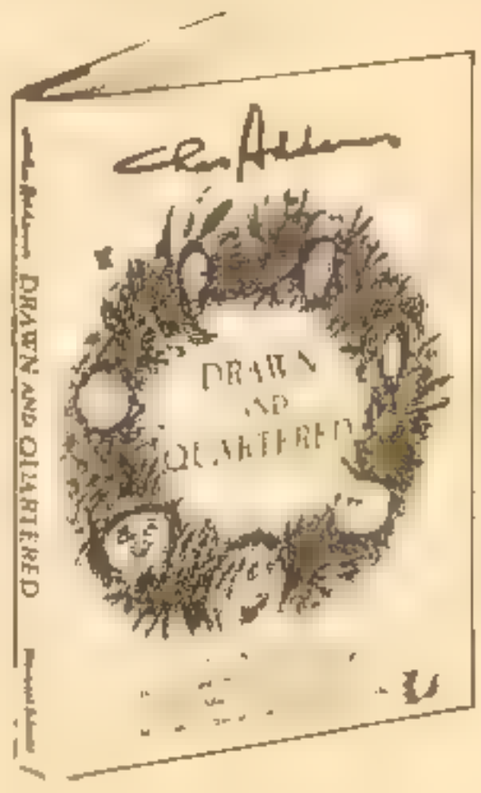
THE RETURN OF ALTER EGO (MONEYS)

We've been deluged by reader comp a nts concerning the whereabouts of their **ALTER EGO** subscription money

We contacted Roy Thomas concerning the matter and he assures us that anyone w shing a refund wi get t. Due to its uncertain future ' Thomas said, 'anyone wishing a refund on **ALTER EGO** will receive whalever moneys are due him

So to those hundred or so of you readers who brought your unbridled fury to Ed tor Joe Brancatel i—many saying you didn't get a refund even after writing Thomas—you can contact Thomas at Alter Ego Enterprises, 305 E 86th St, Apt 18 K West, New York N Y 10028

There's no doubt that a self-addressed stamped envelope will garner a quicker refund



MAKIN' CHEAP BOOK

It s a ways fun to watch rare and supposedly out-of-print comic art books double and triple in price but only if you're a dealer If you're a col ector, you just look on in amazement as prices sp ral out of reach

Luck ly for those collectors interested in pick ng up hard-to-find comic art material, there is Publishers Central Bureau, an out-of-print and remaindered book specialist

For instance fans of Barbare la or Phobe Zeist-Geist have been asked to pay up to $10 for copies of the supposedly out-of-print paperback versions of the characters

Publishers Central offers **both** books in a package for $1

We recently purchased a copy of Charles Addams' **DRAWN AND QUARTERED** in a used bookstore Originally published at $4, we paid $7 for our copy—which was on y in good condition and had no dustjacket

Publishers Central now offers the book—brand new and with the dustjacket—for only $1 98

They also carry some rarer items (a compilation of old **LIFE** drawings for only $1 98! hard-to-find remaindered books (we p cked up the ste lar **MOST OF JOHN HELD, JR.** for $10 off the original $19 95 price) and thousands of non-comic art books and records

Service is fast, courteous and there are dozens of catalogues pub shed each year for junk ma l purveyors. The books are always brand new and well-packed, even the Post Awful can t destroy them To get on their mailing list—they deal strict y by mail—write Publishers Centra Bureau 33-20 Hunters Point Ave., Long Is and C ty N Y 11101

CONVENTION CALENDAR

Monthly gatherings

New York City: COMIC BOOK MARKETPLACE, usually second third Sundays. Information rom Phil Seu ing P O Box 177, Co ney Island Station Brooklyn, N Y 11224

Newton, Mass.: Usually third Sunday Information from Larry Larrabee (617) 899-3172

Silver Spring, Md.: FUNNY-BOOK FESTIVAL, usually one a month information from Touch of Strange Bookshop, 328 Univers ty Blvd E , Silver Springs, Md

Boston, Mass., usually first Sunday Information from YMCA Hunt ngton Ave , Boston Mass

Hollywood, Ca., FIRST SUNDAY CLUB first Sunday Informa t on from Greg Koudou ian, 635 N Citrus Ave , Hol ywood, Ca 90036

Hollywood, Ca SUPER SUNDAY once a month, Informat on from American Comic Book Com pany, P O Box 2921, Ho ly-wood Ca 90028

Fairfax, Va : once a month I nformat on from Town Hall, 3396 University Dr , Fairfax Va

Boston, Mass. COMIC BOOK COLLECTOR S MARKET, fourth Sunday Informat on, (617) 583-6777

Other conventions

San Diego, Ca.: SAN DIEGO COMIC CON, July 31 August 5 Information from San Diego Comic-Con, P O. Box 17066, San D ego Ca 92117

New York, N.Y. NEW YORK COMIC ART CONVENTION, July 4-July 8 Information from Phil Seuling, P O Box 177 Coney s and Station, Brooklyn, N Y 11224

Dallas, Texas. AMERICAN NOSTALGIA CON July 11-July 14 nformation from Larry Herndon, Chairman, 1830 Highland Dr Carro ton, Texas 75006

Houston, Texas: HOUSTON-CON 74 AND STAR TREK '74, June 20-June 23 Information from Earl Blair, 2511 Pennington St Houston, Texas 77016

London, England, COMIC MART July 20 July 21, October 5, December 14 Information from Nick Landau 10 Ladbroke Walk, London W11 3PW England

Zagreb, Yugoslavia SECOND ZAGREB INTERNATIONAL ANIMATION FESTIVAL, June 10-June 15 Information from. Zagreb nternationa Animat on Fest val, Vastro av Lis hski Hall, Zagreb, Yugos avia

FANTASTIC FANZINES

We've never been much for recommending fanzines, usually because the quality varies too sharply from issue to issue But we've come across three publications that provide consistantly excellent services unavailable elsewhere

Foremost among them is **COMIC ART NEWS AND REVIEWS (CANAR),** a small Canadian fanzine published and edited by John Baige Each issue contains highly informative and thought-provoking text and intriguing artwork. Recent issues have included interviews with Russ Heath Barry Smith and Steve Skeates, articles on Gold Key, Jules Feiffer and Warren Publishing and essays on the comic art form itself

The staff is refreshingly aware of the commercial aspects of the comic industry but s also in touch with the aesthet c factors involved Each issue shows increasingly more verve and style, and our only complaint is the **CANAR** is frighteningly underpublicized

Sample copies are available for 20 cents and subscr ptions are $2 per year (add 25 cents for non-Canadian checks) Orders should be addressed to, John Baige, **CANAR,** 28 Admiral Road, Kitchner, Ontario, Canada

Also a necessity for the informed comic fan is **CLAY GEERDES' COMIX WORLD,** the only newsletter about the underground comix industry. Based in Berkeley, Geerdes has his finger on the industry's pulse and is usually the first in print with underground news

Geerdes' writing is highly personal and much of his own bias creeps into his reporting, but **COMIX WORLD** never promised complete objectivity and it is the only game in town We recommend it highly—,ust be aware of personal opinion presented as gospel truth

Subscriptions are $2 50 a year and a complete set of back issues are available for $1 Order from

CLAY GEERDES' COMIX WORLD
915 Indian Rock Ave., Berkeley, Ca 94707

DATELINE: COMICDOM is back again—for the umpteenth time Mike Raub, a long time comic fan who disappears for years at a time has finally resurfaced and brought D·C with him Originally started in 1963 by Ronn Foss, the magazine has always prided itself of fannish news and information, with a heavy emphasis on readers comments

This dittoed fansheet is **not WONDERWORLD** or **GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE**—it doesn't try to be It is a place for communication and letting your hair down about comics—and perhaps more importantly—and comic fandom Half-a buck will bring you the next two issues and orders should be sent to: Mike Raub 7145 South Ottawa St , Freeport, Ill 61022

GEORGE

STATEMENT OF INTENT:

GEORGE will endeavor to review every available fanzine. It restricts itself to reviews of limited edition magazines —items not usually available on newsstands. **GEORGE** will **NOT** review underground comix, black and white comic magazines or color comics issued by the professional comic book companies.

GEORGE operates totally independent of **INSIDE COMICS**. The opinions expressed by **GEORGE** do not necessarily reflect the viewpoints or opinions of the editors, publishers or staff of **INSIDE COMICS. GEORGE**'s opinions are their own, they owe no allegiance to and are not edited or censored by the staff of **INSIDE COMICS**.

TO GET YOUR PRODUCT REVIEWED BY GEORGE:

Simply send a copy of your fanzine to **GEORGE** at the following address: **INSIDE COMICS**, Attn.: **GEORGE**, 11 West 17 Street, New York N.Y. 10011.

If the fanzine's policy is not to issue review copies, please contact **GEORGE** at the above address with the following information: title of item, price and address where a copy can be purchased.

GEORGE greatly appreciates review copies of items it will consider. However, complimentary review copies and copies purchased by **GEORGE** are treated equally, without favoritism. In most cases, the reviewer will not be aware of whether the fanzine has been purchased or if it was sent without charge.

THE GEORGE STAFF:

GEORGE's staff is comprised of four reviewers: Ron Harris, Bob Napier, Art Scott and Jim Vadeboncoeur. All reviews are initialed by the writer at the end of the copy.

HOW GEORGE REVIEWS

For simplicity's sake, all fanzines reviewed are assumed to be 8½" by 11" in size, printed photo-offset or offset, bound by saddle-stitch technique and mailed flat in an envelope. All variations from this "standard" will be noted within the review.

Preceding each review will be a boldfaced legend of information; each legend gives the **FANZINE TITLE** and **NUMBER**, single copy price (subscription rates, if available), page count (interior pages only except where indicated); size (if different from "standard"), frequency (if stated); editor (if known), usage of color, ordering information, general description.

All fanzines are grouped into three broad categories: general interest fanzines; newspaper strip fanzine newspapers, and reprint fanzines.

A FINAL CAVEAT:

Due to the tremendous amount of comic fanzines published each month—and the limited space available—**GEORGE** can **ONLY** review comic fanzines. **GEORGE** regrets it cannot review science fiction, movie or other fan magazines.

GENERAL INTEREST FANZINES:

ACE OF SPADES; 50¢; 32 pages; four-color cover; order from: Bill Devine / P.O. Box 228 / Weymouth, Mass. 02188; amateur strip magazine.

Shades of **DIRTY HARRY, THE SEVEN-UPS** and **THE EXECUTIONER**, here comes "The Predator." "I will subdue and if necessary execute those who may reach beyond the law." And that's a good capsule summary of what happens in his first strip, a 13 page episode drawn by Larry Blamire. Not much to brag about in either script or art category, but fair enough for an amateur effort.

"Collection" is a science fiction strip heavily drawn from the **STAR TREK** mythos and tries hard to approach the feeling and mood of space travel as defined by that series. The strip is overly written and overly drawn; John Phillips is responsible for both chores.

Matthew Howard presents the magazine's third strip, "In The Dark," a mystery-horror story that is somehow unsatisfying in both genres. The art is fair, even good in a few select panels, but that's all.

Spot illustrations, cartoons and a few one or two page strips round out the rest of the magazine, making it a decent buy at 50 cents. Just as long as the purchaser realizes that this is amateur fare. —J.V.

ATLAND-ADVERTISER #8-9; $3.30 for six issues. 12 pages (two pages and back cover mimeographed), side stapled, mailed folded. Michael J. Smith, editor; order from: Eastern Atlantic Publishing Company / P.O. Box 1039 / Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201; adzine.

What is the **ATLAND-ADVERTISER?** To start with, it's an adzine unique among adzines: it has no ads. Not one. In fact, the ten offset pages are filled with "The Challenge," a hopelessly muddled supergroup strip in which each badly drawn panel is not only equipped with the traditional art and dialogue, but also a typewritten caption explaining what is happening in the panel. The story starts in mid-stream with the informative synopsis: "Cronix finds the alien H.O., invisible to guard, etc." That's it, honest! And it's downhill from there!

What is the **ATLAND-ADVERTISER?** It's four pages of rates, subscription information, order blanks and forms, all couched in the most absurd pseudo-legalisms this side of Washington. The editor offers a bewildering array of time payment plans, subscription-for-free-ad offers, and discounts. He even provides a half page of impressive blanks labelled "For Office Use Only" just to polish off the package.

What is the **ATLAND-ADVERTISER?** It's a guessing-game devotee's delight. How can this slim non-zine justify or meet a monthly schedule? And how are we supposed to believe the incredible circulation claim of **four thousand copies**? This **has** to be a gag, but where's the punch line?

So what is the **ATLAND-ADVERTISER?** It's a sociological study of how business forms and corporate thinking have rotted the American mind. It's a source of pleasurable strip-reading for masochists. It's even a place where a spendthrift advertiser might place an ad. No doubt to the editor's surprise. —R.H.

COMIC ART
news and reviews

COMIC ART NEWS AND REVIEWS #13-14; 20¢ each ($2 for 12); 8 pages total each. John Baige, editor; order from: John Baige / 28 Admiral Rd. / Kitchener, Ontario, Canada; monthly; general interest fanzine. (Add 25¢ if paying by check.)

COMIC ART NEWS AND REVIEWS (CANAR) seems to be an excellent little magazine that's been hiding in the woodworks of Canada. I hope it overcomes its shyness and gains a following in the states.

The thirteenth issue has a wondrously informative piece by Ed Fedory entitled "The Fedory File" dealing with the writer's correspondence with then Warren editor J.R. Cochran. It details both the Warren policy of exclusivity and the trials of a freelance script writer. Interesting reading for both fans and aspiring writers.

In the same issue is an article by Dave Sims on Jules Feiffer's theories on the male/female relationship, his sophisticated approach to comics and a short note on his impending lawsuit against the U.S. government.

Two pages of "Comic Poems" follow. These are transcripts of comic book prose, re-arranged visually and transformed into poetry by John Robert Columbo, a native Canadian poet. An interesting approach to the text of comic books.

A one-page interview with **CLAWS OF THE CAT** scripter Linda Fite finishes the magazine.

The prime content of the fourteenth is an interview with comic artist Russ Heath. It's five pages long including the cover photograph. Good reading and much information about both Mr. Heath and comics.

A short blurb about a new Skywald horror magazine and a page and a half of letters conclude the issue.

The vast majority of the writing is intelligent and entertaining, the layout is clean and professional and the price is reasonable. **CANAR** is a good buy. —J.V.

COMIC ART NEWS AND REVIEWS #15/16; 35¢ ($2 for 12); 16 pages total, John Baige, editor; order from: John Baige / 28 Admiral Rd. / Kitchener, Ontario, Canada; general interest fanzine. (Add 25¢ if paying by check.)

CANAR's latest issue contains an interview with Steve Skeates conducted by Dave Sim, a sketch of Skeates by Dave Sim; a cartoon by Dave Sim, "First Con," a comic strip by Dave Sim, "On The Back Of A Pro," a parody comic strip by Dave Sim; the last installment of a five part article on Jules Feiffer by Dave Sim, and "Defining the Art Form" by Dave Sim. If it wasn't for the cover drawing by Gene Day.

The Skeates interview deals heavily with Warren Publications, but it still manages to impart a bit of Steve's own views on comics, the code, ACBA, etc. Worth reading.

The vast amount of Dave Sim artwork is difficult to describe since each strip or drawing is done in a different style. You might like it, you might not. I find it adequate, but not great.

The Feiffer article is incisive and enlightening and, most importantly, well written.

Good reading and good fun and good news can be found in **CANAR**. Try one and see. —J.V.

CARTOONIST PROFILES #20; $2.50 ($8.00 for four issues); 84 pages; Jud Hurd, editor; order from: Cartoonist PROfiles / P.O. Box 325 / Fairfield, Connecticut 06430; article and biography magazine.

Though it shares its size and some of its format with the typical fanzine, **CARTOONIST PROFILES** is a professional magazine aimed at the practitioners of the cartooning art rather than its devotees. Nonetheless, fans may find an item or two of interest among this issue's many features.

Most of the articles are illustrated discussions of the creators of current newspaper strips. The men behind **KELLY, BENJY** and **MARK TRAIL** are given thorough coverage. Other articles deal with animator Paul Terry; editorial cartoonist Jeff MacNelly; and black cartoonist Chester Commodore. There is even a 9-page comic strip done especially for **PROFILES**.

The best features cover two long-ignored facets of comic art. For the comic fans, Jud Hurd interviews the editor and writers of Charlton Comics. An accompanying photo-spread takes us behind the scenes of the operation. Though a bit heavy on self-promotion, the Charlton men's words cast we come light upon this little-known company.

For newspaper strip followers, Bill Crouch, Jr., interviews George Wunder. Wunder wrote and drew **TERRY AND THE PIRATES** for 26 years, far longer than the strip's creator, Milton Caniff, yet he was never quite able to emerge from his predecessor's shadow. Only now, after the strip is dead and Wunder has retired, has anyone profiled this "mystery man" of the comics.

Every prospective **CARTOONIST PROFILES** buyer will no doubt have his own favorite features, but whatever your tastes, be assured each article is comprehensive and capably-written. While the $2.50 price tag may seem high, it is a fair one considering the number of pages and high quality of production. **PROFILES** is a professional publication which lives up to that label in every sense. —R.H.

CHRONICLE

CHRONICLE #3; $1.00; 52 pages; George S. Breo, editor; order from: George S. Breo / 5600 Milwaukee Avenue / Chicago, Illinois 60646; general interest fanzine.

CHRONICLE is an appealing hodgepodge of strips and spot art, managing to pack into its pages something for strip fans of every stripe. The issue's highlight is a science-fiction tale, "Gideon," drawn by John Byrne from a story by the editor. Both story and art are excellent.

In the other strips, art takes precedence over script. "Orpheus" is a talky heroic fantasy handsomely rendered in a delicate line style by Sandy Plunkett. "Prison Planet" is a violent, undergroundish short by Charles Dixon. His cartooning is rough but powerful; unfortunately much of his art is marred by poor reproduction. Two more strips, a super-hero/science fiction serial and a black magic story, are average fan fare. As if all the above weren't enough, **CHRONICLE** also contains two columns, a letters page and countless spot illustrations by everybody and his brother.

The magazine could use a bit more attention to layout, however, as its appearance is rather slapdash. Sometimes it's hard to tell where a story ends and a spot illustration page begins, and the text pages are ragged. But the content is good and varied, the printing (save for the Dixon strip) sharp and the price reasonable. **CHRONICLE** is worth checking out. —R.H.

COMIC DETECTIVE #3; $1.00. 32 pages total; Bart Bush, editor; order from: Bart Bush / 713 Sugar Maple / Ponca City, Ok. 74601; comic fanzine.

One would think that the detective story is perfectly suited for comics, memorable characters, suspense, mystery and fast action are touchstones of both genres. Yet detectives have regularly flopped in comic books, and only a few detective strips have proven durable, despite many attempts. Still, there is a lot of material of interest to fans, most of it has been ignored by fandom at large. Bart Bush is

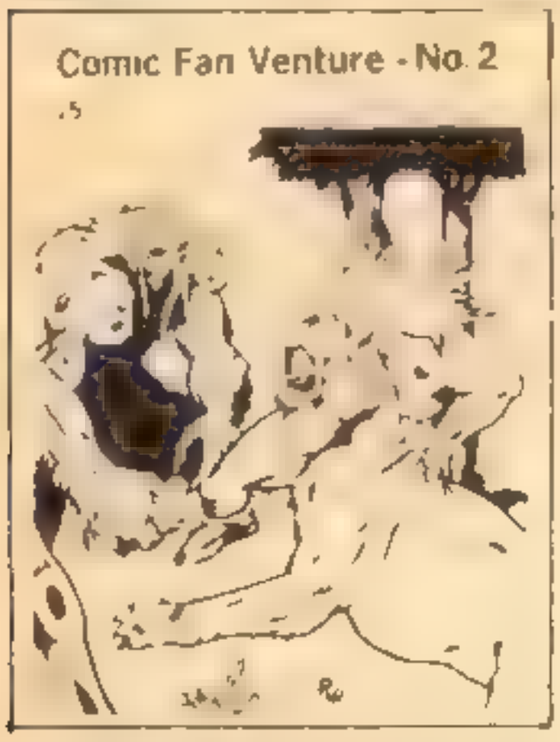
endeavoring to remedy that by publishing an excellent fanzine devoted to cataloging, analyzing and boosting the sleuths and gumshoes of the comics.

This issue is devoted to the greatest detective strip of them all, **DICK TRACY**. Younger fans familiar only with the current strip, which has been on the decline since the early 1960's, may have no notion of just how good a strip **DICK TRACY** has been. For better than 30 years Chester Gould produced fresh, lightly written scripts and beautiful art in his unique style.

COMIC DETECTIVE features a long, excellent interview with Chester Gould, an article on the memorable **TRACY** villains by Shel Dorf, a rare syndicate promotional package from 1931 and an index of the **DICK TRACY** four-color comics. Fan drawings of the **TRACY** cast are spotted throughout the book. Other items include a detective BLB index, a **KERRY DRAKE** comic book index, detective radio show reviews and a letters page.

The layout and the typography are rather unattractive, but that is unimportant. Bart is not out to wow the reader with flash but to provide solid articles and information for fans of the comics' fatfeet. For those folks, **COMIC DETECTIVE** is highly recommended. —**A.S.**

COMIC FAN VENTURE #2; 15¢ ($1.25 for 13 issues, $1.80 in envelope, $2.60 for first class mail, add 50¢ if you pay by check); 8 pages total; monthly; David E. Williams, editor; order from David E. Williams / 632 Gibbon St. / Williams Lake, British Columbia, Canada. adzine.



It seems everyone who knows how to walk into a print shop wants to put out an adzine these days. **COMIC FAN VENTURE** has exactly one ad (a classified), three pages of house plugs, an acceptable cover and a four page article on Hal Foster.

The article, titled "Artical (sic) on H.R. Foster," was written by Paul Schiltsey. Although well acquainted with his subject, Schiltsey is no writer. That's why we have editors; to make sure the copy resembles English prose. Williams is either unaware of this phenomenon or unable to rise to the occasion.

Take the first page of the article, for example. No less than 46 words are hyphenated, only ten of which needed it and only four of those hyphenated correctly. Honest, hyphens just sit there three or four spaces after a word or are tossed into the middle of a word because someone is too lazy to do it right. Wake up, David, the word 'the' cannot be split.

If this isn't distracting enough, the muddled sentences, barrage of misspellings and choppy transitions should have you tasting bile before the second page.

This is inexcusably bad editing. **COMIC FAN VENTURE**'s cries of "Give us your support" are ludicrous until they prove themselves worthy of such support.

The ad rates are cheap and they do claim a circulation of 3,000, but as an adzine trying to purchase a toehold in that ever increasing field, **CFV** ranks as a sorry pretender to the throne. —**B.N.**

COMIC FANTASY QUARTERLY #1; 75¢; 16 pages; Gordon Bailey, editor; color cover; order from: Gordon Bailey / 5613 Oakmont / Ft. Worth, Texas 76112, comic fanzine.

CFQ represents the textbook example of 'slick overkill.' Editor Bailey has produced a middling little fanzine of short articles and a few pieces of art, but has wasted a lot of money on typesetting, slick paper, halftones, bleeds and color. The money is wasted because, with one exception, none of the material warrants such a high class production.

The exception is an impressive centerspread by Dan Adkins which displays his enviable skill with fine tech technique. Other features are "The Superman Mystique," reporting on a talk given by former **SUPERMAN** editor Mort Weisinger (who did more to tarnish that mystique than anyone), a fantasy and discussion of getting newsstand distribution for fanzines. 'Senator Bullshitter," an amazingly unfunny humor strip by Jim Jones, "The Decline and Fall of the Adventure Strip," an unenlightening discussion by a newsfeature syndicate writer, the inevitable Why don't Marvel and DC shape up and give the fans what the fans want' article, a review of a Marx Brothers book; Texas con reports, and a premature evaluation of the animated **STAR TREK**.

Why in the world spend all that money for typesetting such lightweight articles and then fail to proofread properly (typos abound)? Why jeopardize the chances for future issues by plowing so much money into the first issue? Why run the price up to 75 cents with all that overproduction, when cheaper printing methods would have yielded a perfectly acceptable fanzine at half the price? **CFQ** is a poor value by any standards. **A.S.**

COMIC MEDIA NEWS #10; 12 pages; write for foreign rates; Richard Burton, editor; order from: Richard Burton, 22 Woodhaw, Egham, Surrey TW20 9AP England; English newszine.

COMIC MEDIA NEWS is a nice enough newsletter. Issued by the publishers of the fine British fanzine **COMIC MEDIA**, this newszine is well-mounted, well-produced and friendly. Unfortunately, it isn't going to be of much use to American fans.

Most of the comics news is American, reprinted from **THE COMIC READER** for the benefit of English fandom. In fact, most all the content is American, gleaned from various sources, so for us Yanks it's all third-hand. While the opinions and the non-comics material are good, there simply isn't enough to justify buying a trans-Atlantic subscription. Surely, **CM NEWS** provides a valuable service to British fans, but without more British material unavailable to fans on this side of the Atlantic, it must remain strictly a local-interest publication. —**R.H.**

CONTEMPORARY PICTORIAL LITERATURE #7; 50¢; 32 pages, 5½ by 8½; published quarterly; Robert B. Layton, editor, order from: Gang Publications / 4010 Mallway Dr., Apt. A / Indianapolis, Ind. 46326; general interest fanzine.

CONTEMPORARY PICTORIAL LITERATURE, besides having an unwieldy title, is an unassuming mishmosh of art, articles and an interview. Production qualities are average and overall it ranks as a pleasant enough little magazine.

Contents of primary interest are an article on "The Five Most Original Comic Series Of 1973' (their top five are **DR. STRANGE, SWAMP THING, JONAH HEX, PREZ** and Marvel's **CAPTAIN MARVEL**, so you may get some idea of how this magazine may or may not fit your tastes), an interview with ex-Marvel artist Craig Russell, a four-drawing portfolio of Val Meyerik's work and a fascinating cover drawing by Russell.

Secondary interest features include part one of a fiction piece by Tony Isabella entitled "The Hour Of Thunder," 'Revival Survival," a column by Roger Silfer devoted to **THE QUESTION**, a letters column, an article by co-editor Sterno and pages of illustrations by John Byrne (excellent), Don Newton (good), Paul Gulacy (overdone) and Dan Adkins (reprint of a comic page).

The article on the five best comic series will rate according to your degree of agreement with the writer. The interview is quite interesting, especially for those who are interested in the inner workings of Marvel's strip factory. The columns and the story are fair. The best part of the magazine is the artwork by Byrne and Russell, two gentlemen to watch. —**J.V.**

ECLIPSE #4; 40¢, 24 pages total; 7" by 8"; Jack Monninger, Jr., editor; order from: Jack Monninger / 4915 Guion Rd / Indianapolis, Ind. 46254; comic fanzine.

I have mixed feelings about **ECLIPSE**. Young editor determined to do a fanzine rounds up a collection of so-so fan and neo-pro art, adds some short articles and an interview, puts it all in a nice little format marred by spotty reproduction, and sells it at a fair price. Fine so far, but on closer inspection, there's very little **substantial** material here, scarcely enough to justify the publication's existence. Most of the superhero spot illustrations come via the Indianapolis fan "Gang' and the Dan Adkins swipeshop. They range from excellent (John Byrne's cover) to acceptable (Val Mayerik, Bruce Patterson, Adkins/Craig Russell) to truly awful (Paul Gulacy's Dr. Strange and the Paty Greer/Duffy Vohland back cover). There's also a four page science fiction strip by Frank Cirocco that is routine but honest. The main text feature is a moderately informative interview with writer Ed Fedory. Two commentary columns by Doc Lehman are notable for their pathetically bad grammar.

There's almost nothing in this fanzine to excite the eye or set the brain working, and that's the trouble. Those pro/neo-pro names on the ads may help to sell the thing, but unless the art is particularly good or different—and it isn't here—it adds nothing to the publication's value. **ECLIPSE** reads too quickly and leaves you with little to remember it by. Perhaps Monninger deserves praise for making the effort, but not for the run-of-the-mill final product. —**A.S.**

ESGAROTH EXPRESS #3; 10¢; 1 page total; ditto reproduction; monthly; Ron Snyder, editor; order from: Unreal Publications / 3600 Ripple Creek Road / Austin, TX 78746; newsletter.

Boasting a print run of only 200 or so, **ESGAROTH EXPRESS** is an unpretentious little news organ devoted primarily to spreading the word about some of the more fannish publications currently being circulated.

Prime focus is on the publications of editor Snyder and his friends. By no means is this meant to imply that it's a closed circle, just that the scope is limited and most likely open for expansion. If you're new in fandom and are trying to get involved with fanzines that aren't trying to be super slick, this might give you a few leads. —**J.V.**

EUROPEAN CARTOONIST #1; $3.00; 54 pages; Nino Bernazzali, editor; full color covers; square-back binding, order from: European Cartoonist Publishers / Via G. Modugno / 5-16156 Pegli Genoa/Italy; Italian strip and article magazine.

For several years American reviewers have touted comic work from France, Italy and Belgium. But for the average American fan, the language barrier has been an insurmountable obstacle. Now, Nino Bernazzali has come to the rescue with **EUROPEAN CARTOONIST**, a magnificent magazine devoted to introducing the English-speaking world to the best of European comics.

The premiere issue is devoted to Hugo Pratt, a giant of the Italian graphic story. Several profusely illustrated text features about Pratt and his work support the main feature: two complete Pratt strips translated into English for the first time. The 19-page "Secret of Tristan Bantam" stars Corto Maltese, a worldwise South American mariner-adventurer in the early 1900s. "Wheeling," a 12-page adventure, is set in Pratt's favorite locale, frontier America.

Pratt's bold, almost impressionistic drawing style may not be to everyone's taste. Many American fans, steeped in the pretty-picture concept of comic art, will probably label his work crude and figure it isn't worth looking at. Not so. Hugo Pratt is a superior storyteller who knows the value of **good writing**. "Corto Maltese" is particularly rich with plot and a depth of character totally unknown to American comics. —**R.H.**

EXOTIC FANTASY #1; 35¢; 32 pages; Paul LeGrazie, Jr., editor; order from: Paul LeGrazie, Jr. / 250 Garth Rd. / Apt. 7A3 / Scarsdale, N.Y. 10583; stripzine.

This latest addition to the well-known LeGrazie line is virtually a one-man show by W.A. Meugniot, who writes and draws four of the seven strips and several fillers. Meugniot is a newcomer to fan and underground circles who uses the theme of "exotic fantasy" to indulge his passion for scantily-dressed ladies and strange locales. In this issue alone he covers jungle adventure/sex, science-fiction/sex, and fantasy's favorite, astral projection/sex. Meugniot tends to overink his drawings, often losing his foregrounds, but there's no denying the man has talent.

Bob Mosher, a follower of the omnipresent Jones-Wrightson school, does two fair strips. Editor LeGrazie rounds out the book with a crowded three-page pretty-girl/science-fiction yarn.

Like most LeGrazie magazines, **EXOTIC FANTASY** is a good value, boasting sharp reproduction and a remarkably reasonable price. Another plus is that there are only two of those damned 'continued (maybe) next issue' features. —**R.H.**

FANSTRIPS#1; 25¢; 16 pages (one blank) and two-page ad; two mimeographed pages, balance offset; stapled in one corner; Steve Kristiansen, editor; order from: Steve Kristiansen / 6216-185th PL SW / Lynnwood, Wash. 98036, stripzine.

In advertisements, **FANSTRIPS** calls itself "a new concept in stripzines ... (featuring) only complete, non-continued stories." Only the latter part is true. **FANSTRIPS** is, in reality, a shoddy anthology of three strips, an anthology which even the editor doesn't seem to think was worthwhile producing.

The three strips are, "The Arrangers," an unfunny **AVENGERS** parody with execrable art; "Seduction of Iniquitous,' a relief from the first strip, being a lightweight Goldwater/Comics Code satire with decent cartooning, and "The 10,000 Faces of Grover Peanut," a boring pseudo-underground strip about a peanut who dresses as Mickey Mouse and robs a bank.

The page-long introduction sets the

tone for the zine. It's an apology for ever running the strips at all! One story is several years old. Another is not only old, but also suffers from incorrect printing (half of one-page is mirror-reversed) which could and should have been corrected. The third has apparently even been disowned by its creator. But in the words of the editor, "Oh well, read on and enjoy."

FANSTRIPS is the product of an editor who doesn't care enough to deliver what he advertises. To judge from his plea for contributions and the grandiose pipe-dreams under the banner of "things to come," Kristiansen's concept of editorship is simply to gather a few pages of art, staple them together and sit back and see them with a minimal amount of effort.

Such "new concepts" we don't need.

—R.H.

FANTASY ADVERTISER INTERNATIONAL Vol. 3 #50, 75¢ (seven issues for $4.80 surface rate, $6.00 airmail); published every six weeks; Derek Skinn, editor, order from Derek Skinn / 116 Western Rd. / Goole, Yorkshire DN146RD, England, adzine

The greater bulk of what's advertised here is American products so unless you're planning to collect what English items are presented the ads aren't a very wise reason to buy **FAI**. An excellent reason to buy this adzine, however, is the Frank Bellamy interview.

It's the first of a two-parter and is extensive, competent and very interesting. Bellamy speaks smoothly and with candor of his life and experiences as an illustrator and there are hosts of examples of his work spread throughout the talk.

It's possible that many American fans haven't heard of Frank Bellamy but in England he's the Neal Adams of the trade. And then some.

—B.N.

FINDERS KEEPERS #2, 50¢; 28 pages 4¼" by 11"; Donald G. Jackson, editor; order from Donald G. Jackson / 1043 Vine St. / Adrian, Mich. 49221; general median fanzine.

The range of interests are wide in **FINDERS KEEPERS** going from interviews with science fiction author Nick Kamin to filmmaker David Bernstock to artists Jeff Jones and Vaughn Bode. There's also an appreciation of late rock n' roll idol Buddy Holly, book reviews, a brace of photos from the 1972 Detroit Triple Fan Fare convention and highlights of the 10th Ann Arbor Film Festival.

Comic fans will likely tune in for the Jones and Bode interviews with a vigorous curiosity. Both gentlemen were buttonholed by the editor at the aforementioned Detroit convention and while Jones had only enough time for a short rap, Bode managed to distribute plenty of food for thought. Photos and a drawing accompany each session.

FINDERS KEEPERS is a good looking, easy reading fanzine that packs quite a bit of material into its pamphlet-sized pages and with the smorgasbord sampling of features you can pass up a few dishes and still get your money's worth.

—B.N.

FOREIGN COMIC REVIEWS #3; $1.00, 16 pages total; Carsten Sondergaard, editor; order from: Joel Thingvall / 3420-35th Avenue South / Minneapolis, Minnesota 55406; international news and opinion fanzine

This Danish newsletter—in English—presents news and opinion about both fan and professional comics publications throughout the world. Scattered about the national news columns are fascinating tidbits like a history of early Finnish comics, an analysis of the British publishing scene and an artist profile from Japan, where one adult-oriented comic sells 600,000 copies every **week**. Other items cover fanzines originating everywhere from Finland to Canada. There is even a pen-pal column. The American material in **FCR** is a bit dated for the home front, but rounds out the magazine's international character.

Editor Sondergaard started **FCR** "to raise the knowledge of foreign comics and fans and to make better communications between fans in different countries." It's a good goal. It's a good newsletter. If your tastes are the least bit international get it.

—R.H.

GRAVE TALES; $2.00; 36 pages; Bill Pearson, editor; order from: Wonderful Publishing Co. / Box 15755, Arcadia Station / Phoenix, Arizona 85060; comic magazine/coloring book

The thrust of **GRAVE TALES** is supposedly horror comic strips, but only one of three stories really fails in that category. That strip is "Feed," by Robert Parsons. Not only is it an adequate horror story about modern rednecks and ancient legends but it is also a beautiful example of the strengths and visual effects of scratchboard as a medium for comics. Worth checking out.

Also worth reading is part one of "Blood Island," an adventure story by Don Newton written by Pearson. Script and art are both exceptional. All we can hope is that there will be a part two in the near future.

On The Day The Curse Comes Due is a science fiction offering from Mike Roberts also written by Pearson. The art is flashy, yet severely flawed. The script is subtle and hard to follow in many places.

Two pages of filler material from old prints, two nice illustrations by Bill Pearson, an overworked cover by Mike Roberts and beautiful inside covers by Newton fill out the book. The stock is exceptionally heavy and the publishers invite the readers to apply color to the pages and embellish the art to their hearts content.

A really nice book for the price; one might say that **GRAVE TALES** is tomb much.

—J.V.

IOTA #1; 15¢; 12 pages total; mimeographed; side stapled; Greg Puryear, editor; order from: Greg Puryear / 7000 Knightswood Dr. / Charlotte, N.C. 28211. comic fanzine

This one's a real sleeper. Frankly, when I saw the crude little classified ad for it I expected nothing but crudzine. Instead I got a thoughtful, well done collection of articles and commentary about comics by the editor (this is a one-man show)—modest in meo to be sure, but well worth reading. Greg does a short piece on Hawkman, discusses the current state of Marvel, reports on the 1973 Metro Con and does reviews of current comics and undergrounds. Each essay is intelligent and to the point, and, most refreshingly, he writes **very** well indeed. There are a few pretty terrible illustrations, but they're a minor flaw. Greg shows great promise as a fan writer and this unassuming first effort of his is certainly worth the measly cost.

This fanzine set me to thinking about the how-to of first issue fan publishing. So often, when a young fan gets the bug he begins by placing ads pleading for art and articles from anybody, or worse soliciting money for a fanzine that doesn't yet—and may never—exist. That's the wrong way, **IOTA** indicates the course to follow. Do it yourself, all of it if no collaborators are handy, and **get the thing out**. Then, if you've produced a good or at least promising product, contributors should automatically come to you. Make sense?

—A.S.

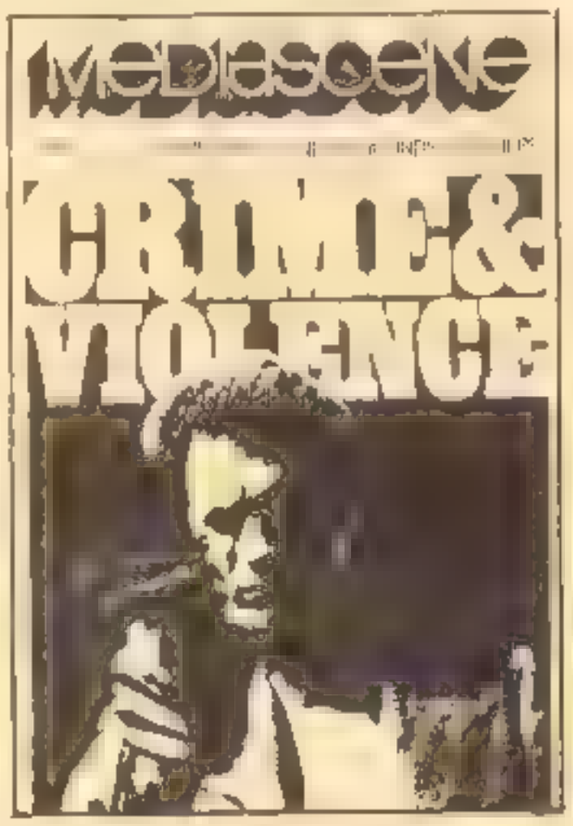
MARCH FORWARD WITH NOSTALGIA #1; no price given (probably free for a 10¢ stamp); two pages total; mimeographed; mailed folded without envelope; Lester Boutilier, editor; order from: Project Revival / 2726 Castiglione St. / New Orleans, La. 70119, newsletter.

This is the official newsletter of something called "Project Revival." Ed Boutilier is trying to organize a campaign dedicated to the return of the superhero heyday of the 1960's, which he considers "the golden age of graphic magazines." For starters, he wants to see **HAWKMAN, GREEN LANTERN, FLASH** and **X-MEN** returned to what he considers their former glories, and urges everyone to bombard Carmine Infantino and Stan Lee with letters demanding just that.

First, it is highly debatable that the 1960's are worth reviving. Second, Boutilier's naivete and **arrogance** in expecting infantino (offensively referred to as "Ol' Dollar Sign Eyes") and Lee to drop their profitable horror titles and switch to super-obscure superhero books to satisfy a vocal claque of rabid fans is positively mind-boggling. He admits that is what he's demanding, yet he forges ahead apparently insensitive to the fact that DC and Marvel are operated as profit-making businesses and not public services. This has to be one of the most crack-brained projects ever to emerge from the fetid swamps of fandom. I've always suspected that die-hard superhero fanatics were a bit squirrelly, and this thing only confirms it.

—A.S.

MEDIASCENE, formerly COMIXSCENE, #7; 75¢ ($4 for six issues); 11¼" by 16½"; Jim Steranko, publisher-editor; bimonthly; order from: Supergraphics / P.O. Box 445 / Wyomissing, Pa. 19610; general interest fanzine



Well, well. Looks like Steranko's up to something. He's changed the name, shuffled the editorial staff around (Gary Brown moves down from co-editor to correspondent), and cut back substantially on the space devoted to comics news and features. It is evident he's decided to broaden the appeal of the magazine in a bid for newsstand distribution.

This is a "Crime and Violence" issue, with articles on the Clint Eastwood movies, the Executioner paperback series, crime books and violent pulps. Max Collins' "Confessions of a Crime Writer" is an engaging piece about successful hardboiled detective series. A lengthy interview with superhack Don Pendleton of **EXECUTIONER** fame is well-conducted and quite informative, in that it offers some insights into the corporate-brit money aura that surrounds this highly successful trash concoction. It does not tell us anything about a good crime writer since Pendleton is anything but. The Eastwood and pulp articles are pedestrian. Steranko supplies a bosomy broad cover and tribute-to-Bogart centerspread (off register), both uninspired.

The paperback news section has been expanded, but the blurbs continue to read as if they were lifted verbatim from the publishers' poop sheets. On the brighter side, the comics news (trimmed to one page each for Marvel and DC) has had most of the gratuitous press-agentry filtered out because of space limitations.

In some ways this issue represents an improvement over the previous one since there are a couple of solid articles and the comics news is crisper. But one can only shake one's head sadly at Steranko's apparent decision to pander to an even lower level of popular taste than comics (in the case of the **EXECUTIONER** and ilk, **very much lower**). It seems that he's decided to abandon comics fandom and if the short shrift given to comics this time proves typical of future issues I suspect comic fans will be abandoning **MEDIASCENE** in droves.

—A.S.

NIGHTSPAWN #2; 75¢; 40 pages; Alex Marciniszyn and Kevin Siembieda, co-editors; order from: Megaton Publications / 5492 Casper / Detroit, Michigan 48210, strip and fiction fanzine

NIGHTSPAWN might be called the typical offset fanzine. It's not terrific, but neither is it bad, and co-editors Marciniszyn and Siembieda have clearly put a lot of honest effort into its production. The book is divided between strips and short stories, all dealing with supernatural/horror themes.

The strips are the stronger suit. Kevin Siembieda writes and illustrates "Eric Blood, Witchmaster," about a grim-faced spookfighter in the days of witch hunts. The script is a bit muddled, but the art shows promise. Kevin also writes "The Homecoming," a 3-page shortie illustrated by Arvell Jones whose work is solid.

Text features include four fiction shorts, book reviews, film reviews, and an article on medieval torture. The stories suffer badly from the "blight of the snap ending." The strongest piece is Alex Marciniszyn's "The Return" concerns a pair of scientific ghost-busters. Their heroic nature is a welcome relief in these days of downbeat horror. Marciniszyn tells the story with interest and a touch of style but then destroys the entire thing by tacking on an illogical, contrived kick finale. The curse of the ancients should fall upon EC for ever popularizing the O'Henry zinger!

NIGHTSPAWN provides enough reading and entertainment to be worth its 75 cent price tag. With a couple more issues it could become a welcome addition to fandom. But one request to the editors: as long as you've already expended the effort to put the fanzine together, you really ought to have given it one last proofreading. There are several cases of repeated paragraphs and botched lines which should never have gotten to the printer.

—R.H.

NUCLEUS #8; $1.25 (plus 25¢ postage); 40 pages; Mark Wheatley, editor; four-color covers and two four-color interior pages; order from Mark Wheatley / 320 N. Harrison #3 / Richmond, Va. 23220; comic and fantasy fanzine

The comic side of **NUCLEUS** is represented by: "One of Our Marvels is Missing," a fine humor strip written and drawn by Bob Smith; "Master Time" with script and art by Wheatley, a two-parter that begins rather unevenly but closes most satisfactorily; Gil Kane and Kane/Adkins drawings of Blackmark, and some spot illustrations and sketches by Jones, Wrightson and Fantuccio.

Robert Henry offers a parody of R.E. Howard's "The Frost Giant's Daughter" in a rather laughless "Groanin" script and a routine story about a man who steals a magic porridge-making ma-

chine Bill Cantey takes a look at an old man who travels through 'The Portal' and the remainder of the issue deals with the **GOR** paperback series by John Norman.

Included are an essay on "Gorean Hook Knives" by Cantey, a brief question-and-answer session with Norman and a "Gor Glossary."

The only notable drawback of **NUCLEUS** is the yellowish paper it's printed on. The pencil and wash work which accounts for most of the strips has difficulty coming away from the background. Nevertheless, it's a decent overall presentation with a savory fan flavor to it. —**B.N.**

ROCKET'S BLAST-COMICOLLECTOR #106; $1.25 ($4 for four issues, $7 for eight issues, $10 for 12 issues, $14 for 18 issues); 120 pages; every six weeks; G.B. Love, editor; order from: The S.F.C.A. / 9875 S.W. 212 St. / Miami, Fla. 33157; adzine-comiczine

This fan institution continues to plug along, nowadays evenly split between features and ads.

A handsome Don Newton drawing of the Phantom graces the cover—Newton's pulp illustrator's style has really looked impressive lately. The reprint section has a beautiful Al Williamson ACG story, with better reproduction than usual, and the fourth part of an old Wally Wood story for Avon. Ray Miller announces he's bowing out of his long-running "Information Center" column. Howard Siegel weighs in with the usual potpourri of stuff and another one of his preposterous anti-underground blue-nose editorials. "Critique" spotlights a most curious review of Wertham's fanzine book by John Adkins Richardson, with a clever cartoon of the lovable Doc by the reviewer. The best thing in the issue is an informed and thoughtful article by Keith Gerbers, "Scorchy Smith, The Strip That Fame Forgot," which includes three samples of the early Noel Sickles and Bert Christman strips. This seminal strip has long been neglected by comics fans, and it's about time somebody got the word out. Plus the usual features: "Science Fiction in Review," "Films Fantastique (**THE THING**)," "Keyhole and Pulps" (Dusty Ayres). Ads are ads. I also see that the subscription rates have gone up since **GEORGE** last reviewed the **RBCC**. —**A.S.**

SWORD'S EDGE, Part 1: "The Sword and the Maiden," by Sanho Kim with Michael Juliar; $1.50; 102 pages, 7½"x5½" paperbound book; color cover; order from: Iron Horse Publishing Company / P.O. Box 1182 / Northland Center Station / Southfield, Michigan 48075; graphic story

"I am trying to show you what I feel a comic book can be." Thus does artist Sanho Kim introduce **SWORD'S EDGE**. Five years ago, Kim, already an experienced artist/writer for Korean comics, came to the United States in search of the 'Great American Comic Book' he never found. For five years he illustrated (and occasionally wrote) for Charlton and Warren. Now, discouraged by what he considers the wasted potential of American comics, he has created a unique comic story which may be one of the most interesting and important professional publications of the year.

Part One, "The Sword and the Maiden," is an adventure tale revolving around the coming to manhood of a young swordfighter in feudal Korea. Befriended by an old man, hoodwinked by a vagabond monk, and seduced by a mysterious woman, Hyund Shin finds himself caught up in events which leave him marked for death by a king's army. Fans of the martial arts will probably particularly like the story, but **SWORD'S EDGE** is not for them alone. The tale is woven with abundant action, a healthy dose of sex and a sprinkling of wit.

Sanho Kim calls his creation a "montage book," the name characterizing the contention that art and story are equally important and actually inseparable. In keeping with the Oriental comics style, Kim's storytelling is solidly rooted in the action and dynamic flow of the film, rather than the designed and posed approach, derived from book illustrations.

Indeed, **SWORD'S EDGE** as a whole is strongly Oriental in approach. Those readers who are unfamiliar with Korean comic art are in for a few surprises. Notably, Eastern cartooning has developed along quite different lines from ours. Mixing American comics style with classical Oriental art long ago gave rise to a tradition of drawing every bit as stylized as the local product—but in a different way. Many American fans have seen a watered-down version of Eastern cartooning in the various Japanese animated TV cartoons. Once the uninitiated reader is accustomed to the conventions he will see how the Korean style is as viable as—and in many ways more flexible than—American Traditional.

While "The Sword and the Maiden" is a complete story in itself, it is but an episode in a longer work stretching over several volumes, ending up as a genuine "graphic novel." This idea alone is exciting, for Kim is exploring one of those "alternate forms" theorists have begged for. **SWORD'S EDGE** is not the "Great American Comic Book." It is too much a transplant in both content and style to truly represent a new peak in the American comic style. But this is a minor point and **SWORD'S EDGE** is an important addition to the comics medium. —**R.H.**

THE BUYER'S GUIDE #52; 50¢; ($3 for 24 issues); 60 pages total; 11" by 17", bi-weekly; Alan Light, editor; order from DynaPubs / R.R. 1 / East Moline, Ill. 61224, adzine.

There's a recent pattern developing in **THE BUYER'S GUIDE** whereby every other issue has a batch of non-ad material and the others are ad ads. This non-ad material is presented so the publisher can get second-class mailing privileges, thereby cutting his postage bills by a good amount. Subscribers are passed along none of the savings but are supposed to get faster mail service and the bonus features—many of which were around in the past anyway.

This issue seems to have stretched things a bit to gather some of those non-ad pages. There's an article of the value of nostalgia taken from the Christian Science News Service, photo essays on Mort Cann ff's studio (from the 1940's) and how a newspaper comic page is printed as well as the resurrection of **TBG**'s letters page.

Murray Boltinoff, Marty Greim and Don and Maggie Thompson also have long installments of their semi-regular columns.

THE BUYER'S GUIDE has always been a lucrative marketplace for buy-and-sell dealing and has kept a rigorous schedule with notable aplomb.

There's only one nagging bit of bull that Light shoves down our craws every issue that we'd wish he'd stow someplace. It's that "Fandom's Bible" bunk. Enough to piss off a preacher. —**B.N.**

THE COMIC READER #102-103; 40¢ each ($2 for six issues, $4 for 12 issues); 24 pages each; 5½" by 8½"; mailed without envelope; monthly; Jerry Sinkovec and Mike Tielenbacher, editors; order from: Street Enterprises / P.O. Box 255 / Menomonee Falls, Wis. 53051; newszine.

TCR is coming along nicely under its new editors. It presents a well organized rundown of the news of the front office goings-on in the comic book business, covering the smaller companies as well as Marvel and DC. **TCR** has elected to steer clear of personalities and in-depth reportage, but it does a good job within those self-imposed limits. As usual the bulk of each issue is devoted to the "Coming Comics" section, which details storylines and credits for upcoming issues, with some sample covers. For those fans who find such information useful, this is the best place to get it. Bill Loudin does his column of news from the undergrounds in #102. Covers are by Starlin and Milgrom (#102) and Gil Kane (#103). —**A.S.**

THE JOURNAL #5; 25¢, 20 pages total, 11" by 17"; Paul Kowtiuk, editor; order from The Journal / 46 Wellington Ave. / W., Essex, Ontario / N9A 1E0 / Canada, adzine.

Outside of the ads are features on mail fraud by Stan Blair and a comic column each by Doc Leham and Steven Barrington. W.G. Carey writes on **STARLOST** and various **STAR TREK**ish spinoffs like TV shows and merchandise; a report on the Fantasy Film Thanksgiving Con by Dale Lillard and Ralph Alphonso and Paul Walry combine for a short coverage of Ray Bradbury's speech at a San Diego College. The front cover, which is at the back of the paper, is a science fiction piece by Frank Ciocco.

THE JOURNAL boasts a circulation of just over 4,000 and should prove especially attractive for Canadians although we Yankees can benefit by [illegible]. —**B.N.**

THE NEAL ADAMS INDEX; $2.00; 28 pages; Doug Murray, editor; order from: Doug Murray / 524 North Hamilton Ave. / Lindenhurst, N.Y. 11757, artist index magazine.

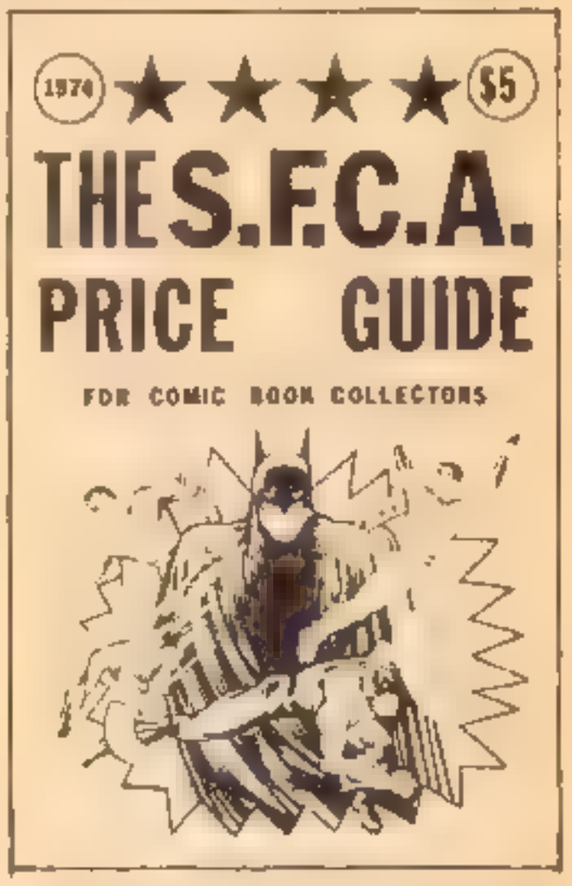
A good competent checklist of an artist's work is a valuable piece of reference material that can assist any collector in finding out about, or finding more about, the artist and his work.

This is a good competent checklist of Neal Adams' comic book art, as well as the work he's done for advertising and other diverse fields. It is liberally illustrated with Neal's art and most of the illustrations are either little known or unpublished.

The information is well displayed and easy to assimilate, and, as an added bonus, there are two pages of Neal's opinions about comics and the work he's done for them.

THE NEAL ADAMS INDEX is as neat a piece of research work one is likely to find in the fanzine field and it is highly recommended to anyone interested in his art. —**J.V.**

THE SFCA PRICE GUIDE: $5.00; 276 pages, 8¼" by 5½"; G.B. Love, editor; four color cover; order from: The SFCA / 9875 S.W. 212 Street / Miami Beach, Florida 33157; comic book price guide.



THE SFCA PRICE GUIDE purports to be a listing of the current market values of all the comic books ever published. It lists, in alphabetical order by title, almost every comic book ever to see the sunny side of a four-color press, followed by the editor's opinion of their values in good, very good, and mint conditions. Sprinkled through the book are 58 cover reproductions showing what some of the rarer items look like.

Also included are checklists of the comic book work of four famous artists: Frank Frazetta, Al Williamson, Wally Wood and Basil Wolverton.

To give the new collector some information about buying and selling comics, the SFCA has included sections on determining the condition of a comic book, rare issues and why they command such high prices, how to avoid and deal with mail frauds, and a series of "inventory forms" designed to allow you to keep track of your collection (for at least 25 titles in your collection). All in all, not a bad book for the money.

But the very concept of a comprehensive comic book price guide demands that one have a complete listing of every comic book available to the buyers. This vast amount of data-gathering is, in itself, a formidable task. Robert Overstreet, the man who first published a price guide, spent over five years just gathering that data. He also spent innumerable hours actually logging the selling price of any comic he ever saw in any ad, eventually averaging the prices to determine the price he listed in his book. The data in **THE SFCA PRICE GUIDE** was transcribed, almost word for word, including a vast number of errors (almost unavoidable in a task this large) which would be next to impossible to arrive at via an independent research project on editor Love's part, from Mr. Overstreet's price guide. Editor Love also admits to "over four solid months of research and work," hardly enough time to even gather all the prices.

The checklists of the four artists were also lifted from other sources, hastily updated, and display no additional research on the part of the SFCA. And while it's nice to have all of these lists in one book, it is still effort expended by people who are uncredited for their research and who will not benefit from their work in this form.

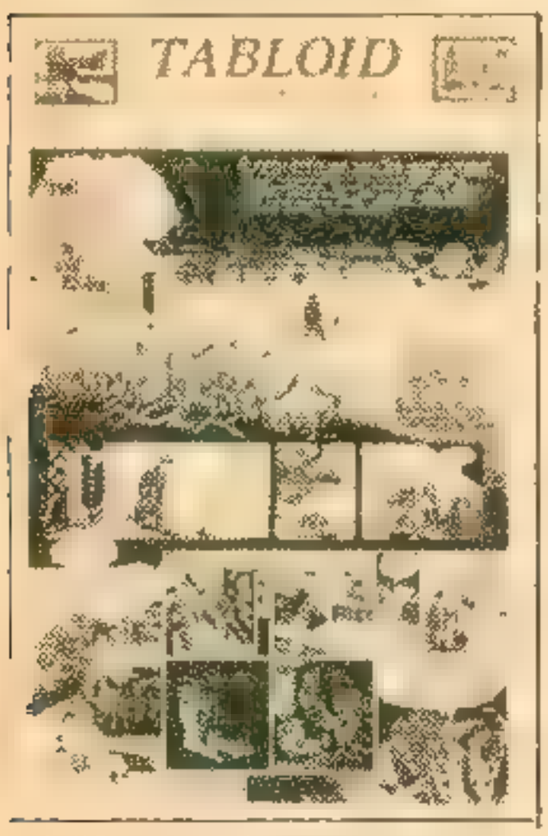
There are a hell of a lot of facts accumulated into this book. Unfortunately, all of them, with the exception of the prices themselves, were merely transcribed from other sources. And prices are merely the opinions of an individual and no more valid than someone else's estimates. The validity

of any comic book price guide is suspect —J V

THE STRIPPER #3, 50¢, 25 pages total; ditto; side stapled, Biljo White, editor, order from: Bill J. White / P O. Box 440 / Columbia, Mo 65201; strip collector's fanzine

This is ostensibly an adzine for comic strip paper-collectors but the editor's trading most of the selling at present. Biljo fleshes things out with a nice little [illegible] pre-Army **BEETLE BAILEY** and a useful discussion on how to mount and file strips. Jim Ivey of the Cartoon Museum sent in a nice bonus with his ad—fascinating samples of pre-Tracy Chester Gould and pre-Kat George Herriman strips (offset). There's a sparse letters section. I would think that strip fans would want to get behind this project; it's well done and long-time fan Biljo knows how to run a fanzine operation —A S

THE SPIRIT, $2.00, six pages total; 11" by 17"; full color; order from: Tabloid Press / P O Box 1064 / Oakville, Ontario Canada. Spirit story



Will Eisner was lecturing a cartooning class at Sheridan College in 1973 and told a Spirit story splash page as a demonstration. He was persuaded to complete the story for publication and here we have the result, printed full size on pebbly bond paper.

Eisner's Spirit stories, of the late 1940's particularly, unquestionably rank among the finest graphic story achievements but his current creations while still superior to 90 per cent of all comic book product, have lost much of their former brilliance. The story here, "The Invaders," is a typical Spirit fable featuring Eisner's oft-used poor-little-incompetent-schmuck character in a well-worn science fiction plot. It is marred by Eisner's most unfortunate new characteristic, an unconvincing injection of "relevance" that is rather embarassing. The story runs five pages and Eisner's black and white storyboard for the strip fills out the book.

One cannot fault the quality of the book's production but $2.00 for six pages is pretty steep (though more reasonable than the original $3.00 price). The confirmed Eisner fan will want this book, but others are advised to seek better Spirit stories elsewhere. His old—and new—stories for Warren are superior to this one, at a better price. —A S

THE WORLD OF FANZINES by Fredric Wertham, M D.; published by Southern Illinois University Press; $10.00.

The dust-jacket blurbs for this serious study of fanzines make quite a point of Dr Wertham's credentials as scientist and scholar so, we are led to expect a thorough, scholarly research job and presentation.

What we get instead is a shallow quickie overview of fanzines, marked by gaping holes in source material, astounding ignorance of the subject, senile dementia and laughably bad writing of the quack-scholarly variety. Unfortunately, since this is the only book on fanzines it becomes by default the "definitive work on fanzines," and will thus serve to misinform those curious about the subject until someone comes along and does the job right.

The problem is that Wertham is a **dabbler** in fanzines, fundamentally disinterested in the subject matter important to fans (comics, science fiction etc.). In focusing on the special features of fanzines as a communications medium and their in-group flavor, he has missed the most important point. Which is that fanzines are a vast repository of specialized information and critical discussion that's available nowhere else. Virtually all the extant information on the history of comics and their development as an art form are to be found in the fanzine literature.

Then there is the matter of special pleading. Throughout the book Wertham never misses an opportunity to make wholly gratuitous remarks on his favorite bugaboo violence (even devoting a chapter to "Three Touchy Subjects—Pornography, Drug Abuse and Violence"). Sure, violence and such are discussed in fanzines, along with everything else under the sun but he harps upon it with such frequency that one figures the book might have been better titled **Fanzine Attitudes Toward Violence**. Though the vestiges of scientific honesty require him to state that the quoted fanzine statements on violence "have no claim to be representative of the whole field" he deliberately distorts the climate of fanzine opinion by quoting **only** those remarks that bolster his views blithely ignoring the counterexamples.

The book is also outrageously overpriced. In fact it ought not to have been a book at all. There is about enough significant material herein to provide a longish article in the **Journal of Popular Culture** titled "A Brief Overview of Fanzines." But as a book it is barely padded with wide margins and repetitious lists to make it just thick enough, it is a colossal rip-off, a pathetic parody of a scholarly monograph which ought to put an indelicable smudge on the reputation of the S I U Press.

In sum: it is not enough to be relieved that Wertham hasn't mounted an assault on fanzines as he did on comics; it is not enough to be pleased that this big-time pedant saw fit to say some nice things about fans' modest little amateur publications. Fanzines deserve a **genuine** in-depth scholarly analysis not a pompous, biased, uninformed gloss of the subject. —A S

WONDERWORLD #10; 75¢ ($3 for four issues); 40 pages; quarterly; Richard Kyle, editor, order from: WONDERWORLD / P O. Box 16168 / Long Beach, Ca 90806 comic fanzine

WONDERWORLD [illegible] material on the graphic story. Notable feature this time is "Jon Fury," Alex Toth's semi-legendary adventure strip done for an Army paper in 1955. Toth introduces the strip and the first seven episodes of "Jon Fury in Japan" are presented, with the story to be concluded next issue. Toth is a master of the graphic story form, and here we have an opportunity to study not only his stylish art but his too seldom seen scripting talent.

Mystery writer/comics fan Max Collins gives us "Mickey Spillane, Graphic Story-teller," a definitive discussion of that writer's work for comics, with two pages of the Spillane/Ed Robbins "Mike Hammer" daily strip. One may quarrel with Collins' high opinion of Spillane's talent, but not with the quality of the article.

Four pages are wasted with a feature on "Superlan" the sadly unfunny Nick Meglin football humor strip, sporting some of the worst Jack Davis art ever to see print. Despite Kyle's evident sophistication, he has managed to include a supremely forgettable item in virtually every issue, this lapse in good sense is a continual puzzle.

Other features include a New York Convention report by Mark Evanier; the third episode of Dan Spiegel's "Penn and Chris" strip, excerpts from a panel discussion on the EC war comics, a parody poem about Bill Gaines by Jerry DeFuccio, Clay Geerdes' "Comix World" with a silly dissertation on the current satanism fad in comics; and the usual columns and short features.

Despite the occasional clinker, **WW** is certainly the best-produced, most intelligent periodical available to the serious graphic story enthusiast. Richard Kyle has done more than anyone to move comics fandom out of its often infantile superhero-addict origins and into serious discussion of an important art form and his publications are always worthy of the thoughtful fan's attention. —A S.

NEWSPAPER STRIP FANZINES

CRITTER #4; 60¢ ($3.00 for six issues); 16 pages; James Petty, editor; order from: Hanthercraft Publications / Box 709 / Corinth, Mississippi 38834; newspaper strip reprint magazine

CRITTER continues to reprint two classic newspaper strips, Falk and Davis' **MANDRAKE THE MAGICIAN** (1938) and Alex Raymond's **RIP KIRBY** (1947). The old **MANDRAKE** had a sort of charm today's version lacks. It's fun. **KIRBY** features Alex Raymond at the extreme of his magazine-illustration style. **CRITTER** does both strips justice, though some of Raymond's fine lines are regrettably lost.

Extra icing on the cake is editor Petty's **TANDRA**, a serialized fantasy strip drawn with a clean, professional style which partly makes up for the slow-reading caption-block storytelling.

A sample issue will tell you whether **CRITTER** is your meat. If so, prepare to subscribe for all stories are continued from issue to issue. —R.H.

THE MENOMONEE FALLS GAZETTE #101-116; 75¢ (12 for $8.00, 26 for $16, 52 for $29); 48 pages total; 11" by 17" mailed folded in envelope; weekly; Jerome Sinkovec and Michael Tiefenbacher, editors; order from: Street Enterprises / P O. Box 255 / Menomonee Falls, Wis 53051; newspaper strip paper.

The basic concept of **THE MENOMONEE FALLS GAZETTE** is the amassing and distribution of the better currently-running adventure type newspaper comic strips. The idea is that strip collectors and fans will no longer have to subscribe to a dozen or so newspapers in order to get their favorite strips each week. There's only about a three week delay in publication.

The modern strips being run each week are (six daily strips each except where noted) **PRINCE VALIANT** (Sunday only), **JOHNNY HAZARD** (and Sunday), **RIP KIRBY, SECRET AGENT CORRIGAN ; CAPTAIN EASY; DOCTOR KILDARE; JEFF COBB; RICK O'SHAY; STEVE CANYON** (and Sunday), **KERRY DRAKE** (and Sunday), **JULIET JONES; FLASH GORDON; AIR HAWK** (and Sunday), **THE PHANTOM, FRIDAY FOSTER** (and Sunday), **ON STAGE** (and Sunday), **DATELINE: DANGER; TARZAN** (and Sunday), **BUZ SAWYER; STEVE ROPER & MIKE NOMAD; BRICK BRADFORD; BIG BEN BOLT, DICK TRACY;** and **MANDRAKE**.

To add even more spice to this already impressive lineup, the **GAZETTE** also carries a fine selection of foreign reprint strips. They include **TUG TRANSOM** the incomparable **MODESTY BLAISE, PAUL TEMPLE; THE SEEKERS, GUNNER ; JEFF HAWKE; JAMES BOND; GARTH;** and **SCARTH A.D. 2195**. The vast majority of these are from England and were picked primarily for their artistic merits. Not so strangely, they all display a high degree of writing ability also.

As if that weren't enough, Jerry and Mike toss in a goodly selection of American reprint strips, too. These oldies are **BATMAN** (from 1944) **BUCK ROGERS** (from 1958), **RED BARRY** (1935), **SUPERMAN** (1942) **THE SPIRIT** (1942) **MALE CALL** (circa 1943) **PETER SCRATCH** (1966), **BEN CASEY** (1964); **RED RYDER** (1952) and **KEVIN THE BOLD** (1955).

Reproduction on the current and foreign strips is excellent, all having been photographed from publishers' proofs. Continuity on all current strips is guaranteed and hasn't faltered in 116 issues. The reprint strips are mostly done from newspaper copies of the strips and have a tendency to fall down a bit in clarity. Fortunately, editors Sinkovec and Tiefenbacher take great pains to assure that the reproduction is still the best possible despite the adverse circumstances. And, on the whole, I must say that they succeed.

Space doesn't permit a detailed description of each and every strip, but suffice it to say that the editors are collectors and have excellent taste in comic strips. If you enjoy the comic section of your newspaper, you just can't help but loving the **GAZETTE**. —J V.

THE MENOMONEE FALLS GUARDIAN #31-36; 35¢ each (12 for $4.50, 26 for $9.00, 52 for $17); mailed without envelope; weekly; 16 pages each; 11" by 17"; Jerry Sinkovec, publisher; Mike Tiefenbacher, editor; order from Street Enterprises / P O. Box 255 / Menomonee Falls, Wis. 53051; humor comic strip paper.

If you're looking for humor comic strips and you don't want to subscribe to a dozen newspapers or wait for paperback reprints to see collections of your favorites, the **GUARDIAN** was made for you.

Each issue carries a successive printing of a week's worth of dailies and two Sunday selections (in black and white). The line up of current strips is **CONCHY, TUMBLEWEEDS, BEETLE BAILEY, B.C., SALLY BANANAS** (now replaced by **GASOLINE ALLEY**), **JOE PALOOKA, MICKEY FINN** and also **BROOM HILDA** and **POGO** (both daily and Sunday).

From the good old days we have **THIMBLE THEATRE STARRING POPEYE** (1934), **KRAZY KAT** (1934 into 1935), **ALLEY OOP** (1949), **CAP AIN EASY** (1951) and from England **ROMEO BROWN** (1960).

With all this there's still room for a few short features in the margins and there's always a smattering of **THE BORN LOSER, WINTHROP** and **EEK & MEEK**.

The reproduction is sharp, the tight weekly schedule is maintained and this is a must get item for lovers of the "funnies." Now if they'd only knock out the Palooka, slip something in Finn's drink and make it hard on the Captain it would be 100 per cent funny. —B.N

VINTAGE FUNNIES #35; 60¢ (12 for $5.00, 26 for $10.00, 52 for $10.00); 16 pages total; 11" by 17"; mailed weekly without envelope; Alan Light, editor, order from: Funnies Publishing Co. / RR #1 Box 297 / East Moline, Ill 61244, newspaper strip reprint paper.

GEORGE previously reviewed **VINTAGE FUNNIES #28**, but the disparity between the contents of that issue and **VINTAGE FUNNIES #35** is so great that I

almost have to view them as two distinct papers This doesn't reflect too well on the continuity level that **VINTAGE FUNNIES** can promise a long-term subscriber

The concept behind **VINTAGE FUNNIES** is rare old newspaper strips for the masses. Within the pages of the latest issue are a 1940 **SUPERMAN** Sunday page by Siegel and Shuster; a **DON DIXON AND THE HIDDEN EMPIRE** Sunday page (undated) by Bob Moore and Carl Pfeufer, a **BUCK ROGERS** Sunday by Phil Nowlan and Dick Calkins (also undated); **MICKEY MOUSE** by Floyd Gottfredson—six daily strips, undated, a rare page of a proposed revival of **LITTLE NEMO** by Winsor McCay, Jr from 1939, **IN THE LAND OF WONDERFUL DREAMS** Sunday page by Winsor McCay (undated), an early Hal Foster **TARZAN** Sunday page from 1931, George McManus' **THEIR ONLY CHILD**, a Sunday page from 1914, six **BATMAN AND ROBIN** daily strips from 1944 by Bob Kane, **TERRY AND THE PIRATES** from 1938 by Milton Caniff six daily strips and a Sunday page of **DICK TRACY** by Chester Gould from 1939 a **TAILSPIN TOMMY** Sunday page by Hal Forrest (undated), a **KRAZY KAT** Sunday page by Herriman (undated) and another Calkins **BUCK ROGERS** Sunday strip

The reproduction varies immensely from strip to strip, dropping to unbelievable depth on **KRAZY KAT**, **THEIR ONLY CHILD**, and the Sunday **TERRY** strips The daily **TERRY** strips are well reproduced but fill only about one half of the page—they could easily have been enlarged to fill the space alotted them and to make them more attractive to the collectors who are, after all, the main clientele of **VINTAGE FUNNIES**

Aside from the fact that most of the strips are undated, and thus hard for the collector to index for his collection, several of them are strangely defaced For instance, the title logo on the **TARZAN** page has had the word **TARZAN** removed leaving only the words "by Edgar Rice Burroughs." It could easily have been chalked up to an accident had not the name Tarzan been deleted in at least two other places in the body of the strip. The main title block was also removed from **THEIR ONLY CHILD** making it impossible for a new reader not overly familiar with all the strips to even know what he was getting On **TERRY AND THE PIRATES** the words "and the pirates" are mysteriously blocked out on the Sunday page. No explanation for any of the omissions is given.

In fact, editor Light doesn't bother to exercise much, if any, editorial control over the magazine Effort is made to complete a story but not necessarily a full year of a strip. One gets the feeling from the letters column that one's favorite strip just might mysteriously disappear in time. This just happened with **MANDRAKE, TIM TYLER'S LUCK, BRICK BRADFORD, THE PHANTOM** and **THIMBLE THEATER** All were dropped when King Features Syndicate took "back all permission" to print them Apparently there is no contract and if you had subscribed to get those strips you'd have been out of luck

And one gets the impression, with all the obvious efforts to delete titles and names, that any is not kosher with the reprint rights. It's just an impression in mind you

If you are really interested in these old strips, and they are rare old strips, and are willing to take your chances on a few substitutions or missing episodes, **VINTAGE FUNNIES** is about the only place that you can find them. —J.V.

REPRINT FANZINES:

CARTOON, 1973 Annual; 55; 50 pages total; 11" by 17"; unstapled; mailed folded; Jim Ivey, editor; order from: The Cartoon Museum / 661 Obispo Ave. / Orlando, Fla. 32807; cartoon art portfolio.

Jim Ivey is a professional editorial cartoonist, as a labor of love he operates The Cartoon Museum, for which he has amassed a large collection of original art reflecting all facets of the cartoon form: comic strips, comic books, gag panels, sports and editorial cartoons etc The **CARTOON** Annual is an eclectic selection of art from this collection all reproduced same size from the originals All the pen and ink forms mentioned above are well represented, but the largest sampling is of humor strips from 1900-1930: Swinnerton, Opper Herriman Goldberg and the like. A special four page section shows the development of Roy Crane from amateur to professional, displaying some of his art school and notebook cartooning The typical comic book fan, I'm sad to say, will probably find the greater part of this wide-ranging selection of slight interest, though there are some odd comic book pages and samples of Frazetta (a Johnny Comet strip), Mort Drucker and Robert Crumb The comic fan with broader interests and a sense of history will find delights on every page and will gladly pay the price after all, such a selection of comic art reproduced from the originals could come from no other source

I must bitch about the format however The 25 loose sheets are folded across for mailing and one must turn the pages against the grain, struggling to keep them from folding up on you In addition in order to adhere to the same size credo of the portfolio, the art is run both lengthwise and widthwise in random fashion. All the fold-fighting and page-rotating is a royal pain. And this discourages one from picking up the book at idle moments for a leisurely browsing, the reading style best suited for material of this sort. It really should be done in an 11" by 17" saddle-stapled magazine format —A.S.

E.C. CLASSIC REPRINT #5 (WEIRD FANTASY #13, May-June 1952); $1.00 ($5 for six issues or $12 for 16 issues); 36 pages; standard comic book size; color cover and interior; Ron Barlow and Bruce Hershenson, editors; order from: East Coast Comix / P.O. Box 1290 / Great Neck, N.Y. 11023; reprints of EC comics

WEIRD FANTASY #13 is a classic EC science fiction comic from the period when they were just becoming the beautiful blends of art and story for which they are remembered. The art was a labor of love that had yet to be jaded by the repetitiousness that was to follow The stories were still fresh and the snap endings hadn't become so predictable In short, this is the best reprint that East Coast Comix has yet released

Stories in this issue are, "The End," a tale of the future and the ten foot discrepancy that doomed mankind with beautiful early Wally Wood art, "The Trip," a chilling tale by Jack Kamen "Home To Stay" another Wood classic with a shining hero, and "Don't Count Your Chickens" one of Joe Orlando's most superbly drawn comic strips There's a cover by Al Feldstein, a short Feldstein biography accompanied by a photograph, a new letters page and the original letters page that appeared in the issue when it was first published

Find out why EC has the reputation for greatness it enjoys among fans; get a copy of **E.C. CLASSIC REPRINT #5** and be transported into other worlds as only the EC crew could portray them —J.V.

FLASHBACK #2-4; $3.00 each ($10 for four); 64 pages each; Alan Light, editor; four-color front covers; order from DynaPubs / R.R. 1 / East Moline, Ill. 61244, Golden Age comic reprints.

FLASHBACK #2 (SPECIAL EDITION COMICS #1): This is a reprint of a one-shot title from 1940 featuring Captain Marvel from cover to cover In mint shape the original sells for around $250 The true Golden Age collector will find this a poor second to having the real McCoy, however, and the casual browser will gag at the kind of reproduction he's getting for the money And any collector should feel justifiably incensed at being asked to subsidize Light's personal collection by purchasing this shoddy product

It's high time that DynaPubs, and Alan Light in particular, learns that being a major fan publisher involves more than a fat bankroll and large advertising base. There's a priceless commodity known as being responsive to one's public and the aesthetics of their hobby And there's an obligation on his part to learn something about the printing trade as well as the marketing aspects of publishing Light, for all his possible good intentions, has failed to deliver in these areas

FLASHBACK #3 (USA COMICS #1) This one is worth about $100 on the collector's market. It sports a Simon and Kirby cover, the origin stories of Mr Liberty The Whizzer and Rockman, plus strips with The Defender, Young Avenger and Jack Frost. Artists include Basil Wolverton, Syd Shores and Avison and Garbee

FLASHBACK #4 (SPECIAL COMICS #1) Here's one from 1941 that was renamed **HANGMAN COMICS** with its second issue Featured are three Hangman strips and two strips with Roy and Dusty, The Boy Buddies, with art by Paul Reinman The inside front cover has the death of The Comet and subsequent origin of his brother's alter-ego, The Hangman

This issue, like previous issues is heavy on the rock 'em sock 'em action, light on plot and an easy trip through comic book nostalgia

The Hangman strips, in addition to the violence feature a liberal sprinkling of subdued sex. Egads, was Wertham right?

It's a shame the price and reproduction on all these comics is so far off the mark The idea is a good one —B.N.

SPECIAL EDITION SERIES #1 (WHIZ COMICS 7 to 28); $9.95; 320 pages; Alan Light, editor; four color front and back covers; order from Special Edition Reprints / RR 1, Box 297 / East Moline, Ill. 61244; comic reprint magazine.

SPECIAL EDITION SERIES #1 is an impressive looking package. At 320 pages, it must be one of the most ambitious projects ever undertaken by a fan publisher. The covers are color reprints of the front covers of two **WHIZ COMICS** and quite handsomely printed The square binding adds to the overall professional look of the product

The interior, aside from a very short conversation with Captain Marvel artist C.C Beck, is composed of 22 Captain Marvel stories from **WHIZ COMICS** numbers seven through 28. Also included are the first four **SPY SMASHER** stories. These strips are actually a part of the Captain Marvel stories as Spy Smasher was introduced in a series of two-part stories, the first part of each being the Captain Marvel story. In order to maintain continuity and to actually complete the Captain Marvel adventures, the Spy Smasher stories had to be printed also.

Other important highlights in the history of Captain Marvel that are included in this magazine are the introduction of Captain Marvel Jr., the first appearance of The Vengeful Four and the premier of Captain Nazi

Just the Captain Marvel stories are reprinted several pages of ads from the original comics also appear The reproduction is only fair The captions and dialogue are all readable, but the drawings look washed out, similar in quality to a decent photostatic copy The blacks are all grey and the majority of the white areas appear a bit murky

The stories are fun to read, if you like Captain Marvel, but I'd suggest that you pick up some of the current DC **SHAZAM!** comics and check out the stories that they are reprinting to make sure you are interested enough to invest your $9.95 in this collection. —J.V.

THE MENOMONEE FALLS GUARDIAN SPECIAL #1 (ALLEY OOP); 35¢; 12 pages total; 9" by 16"; mailed folded; order from: Street Enterprises / P.O. Box 255 / Menomonee Falls, Wis. 53051; newspaper strip reprint fanzine.

This modest little package from Street reprints a complete Alley Oop story (10/2 to 12/22/72) from the current newspaper strip done by Dave Graue Alley takes a modern-day kid back to Moo with him for some Mesozoic angling, they get towed out to a dinosaur inhabited isle by their catch, Oop fights dino, dino fights dino, volcanos erupt, etc. Graue's work doesn't really measure up to the V.T Hamlin original but he's a competent cartoonist and there are some funny moments. The format is a good one and the price is fine, I'm looking forward to other humor strips in this series. This one's mainly for Oop fans. —A.S.

QUINTESSENCE PRESENTS ... THE PHANTOM #1; $1.50; 48 pages, Johnny Achziger and Merle Derrick, editors; order from: QUINTESSENCE PUBLICATIONS / P.O. Box 5246 / Spokane, Wash. 99205; newspaper strip reprint magazine

With the exception of a cover drawing of The Phantom by Neal Pozner and a title page illustration (also blown up and used for a centerspread) by Anthony Kowalik this magazine is devoted to reprinting a 1942 episode of The Phantom by Lee Falk and Ray Moore. The reproduction is pretty good although a small amount of detail is lost in several places Overall it ranks above most reprint magazines in quality of reproduction for strips of this era

The story itself begins in mid-episode and involves The Phantom in his efforts to get revenge on the Japanese army which he believes is responsible for this sweetheart's death. She isn't dead (surprise!) as he discovers by page eight, and the rest of the story details their destruction of the invading army

If you like The Phantom and enjoy his exploits from this period, you'll probably like this magazine, but there isn't anything in this issue to appeal to anyone else. —J.V.

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VIEWPOINTS

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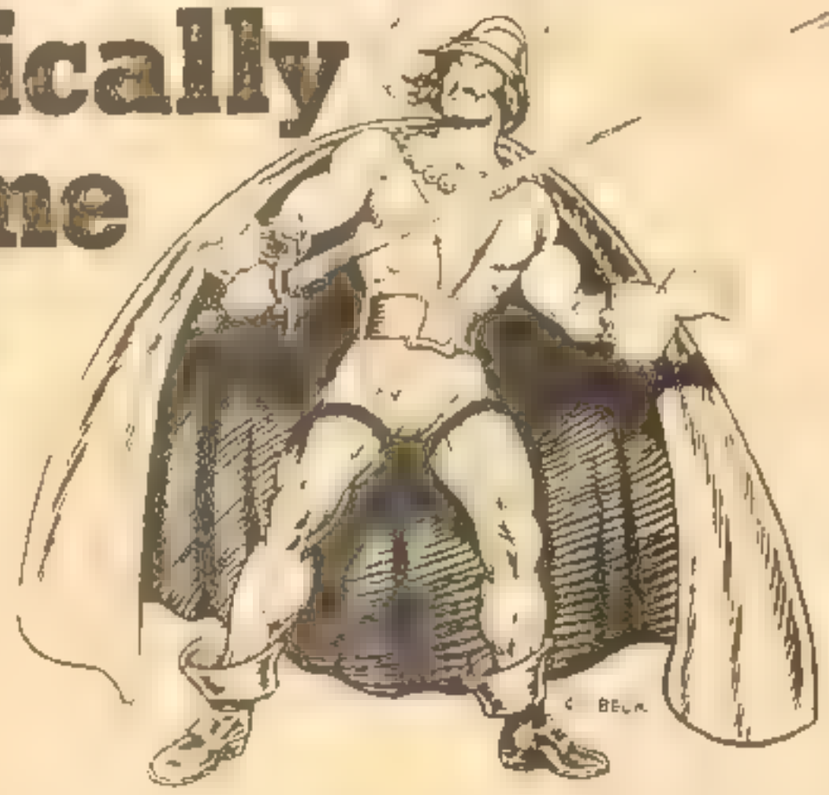
How to Create a Completely Awful Comic Book Character in Practically No Time at All

BY C.C. BECK



There's an old, old story about the village blacksmith and the village idiot which anyone past the age of ten must have heard by now.

The blacksmith made a horseshoe and tossed it, red hot, onto the center of the floor to cool. In walked the village idiot, picked up the horseshoe, and cast it aside in a fraction of a second.

"Well, Lem," the hangers-on chuckled, "that hoss-shew were purty hot, weren't it? Har, har, har!"

"Nope!" the village idiot declared. "'Tweren't that. It's just that it don't take me long to look at a hoss-shew!"

* * * * * * * *

Comic book characters are not created by artists or writers but by publishers. Publishers are the village idiots of our civilization; if it weren't for them, nothing would ever be published.

A publisher is a man with lots of money, a large, beautiful office, a jet plane and connections with writers and artists, bootblacks, bookies, politicians and prostitutes of various sorts. But since he's a bigshot he doesn't talk personally with any of these people; he gives orders to his vice presidents, directors and secretaries. They relay the publisher's orders to their underlings, who in turn give instructions to their underlings, who in turn call assistant underlings, who finally call in workmen such as carpenters, plumbers, artists and writers.

* * * * * * * *

"Have you brought an outline and some sketches of our new character, boys?" the assistant underling asks the writer and artist.

"Yes," the writer answers. "I understand he is to be based on the character D'Artagnan in **THE THREE MUSKETEERS** ..."

"We can't call him that," the assistant underling interrupts. "Too hard to pronounce. Go ahead."

'D'Ar ... or whatever we call him ... has three friends: Athos, Porthos and Aramis. these three ..."

"Forget them—they're not important. Who's the villain?"

"There are two: The Cardinal and his agent, Milady."

"Great, I can see them now. The Cardinal is an old guy with a long beard, sort of an evil magician type. Milady is sexy, wears a tight skirt split up the side..."

"In the seventeenth century? Skirts were..."

"Never mind what they were," the assistant underling says. "Nobody'll know the difference. Let's see those sketches now."

"Here is D'Artagnan, or whatever we're going to call him," says the artist. "I have researched the costume thoroughly."

"Those baggy pants are out," the assistant underling states. "Put him in tights to show off his legs. Why is he wearing hip boots? Did he work in a sewer? Cut the boots down to ankle length. Get rid of the lace shirt—he looks like a fag. Give him a body shirt open to the waist. The cape can stay but make it longer. And make his sword bigger; make it about five feet long so he can swing it around and take on a whole army at once."

"Well, all right," the artist says reluctantly. "This was in the seventeenth century, when men fought with rapiers, not with broadswords, but I guess I can stretch things a little."

"And get rid of the silly old blunderbuss, too," the assistant underling orders. "It makes him look like a hillbilly."

"It's a musket. He **was** a musketeer, you know."

"Okay, keep the gun, but make it a super ray gun or something like that. Maybe it shoots magic bullets, huh? And let's make his sword a magic sword, unbreakable and all that jazz, okay?"

"In his first fight, according to the book, his sword was broken and he was knocked cold," the writer points out.

"Forget the book. Our guy—let's call him Dar—is invincible. He's built like a football player; let's give him some kind of a fancy helmet, okay? He's a master of judo, karate, kung fu, and everything. He beats bad guys up with his fists, has his own private jet plane .. "

"In the seventeenth century?" asks the writer.

"Well, make it a flying carpet then. He flies around on it, along with his funny servant who is put in for comic relief. Did he have a servant?"

"Oh, yes," the writer says.

"Good, we wanna be authentic," the assistant underling chuckles. "Make him a Cambodian or a Korean or something—they're not organized enough to protest. He'll do all the pratfalls, get things screwed up and so on, right? Funny, funny!"

"Do you want me to draw in a comic style?" the artist asks.

"Oh no! Make everything realistic as hell. Nobody draws comics in comic style—you know that."

"I have here some plot outlines," the writer says. "Want to look them over?"

"Plots-schmotz," the assistant underling snorts. "No time for that; we've got to get rolling. The publisher wants thirty-two pages, ready for the engraver, here by next week. Get going."

"How about a cover drawing?" the artist asks. "Want me to make some sketches?"

"Naw, our art department will take care of the cover. Our publisher sent down a sketch made by his nine-year-old kid and the art department is already working on the cover. Looks great—shows this big muscle-covered guy posing on top of the world with big lettering "The Three Musketeers Ride Again" carved out of rock behind him. Ought to sell a million copies."

"But didn't the publisher—anyone—read the book?"

"Naw, who reads? We got the title from the book, that's all that's necessary. It don't take us long to look at a book. Scram, get to work! I've outlined everything for you, so it shouldn't take you too long. Goodbye."

And thus a new comic book character, "Dar the Invincible", is born. Doesn't it sound wonderful? It will probably be on sale soon, if I know publishers. One or another of them must be working on it right now—they've tried everything else. □

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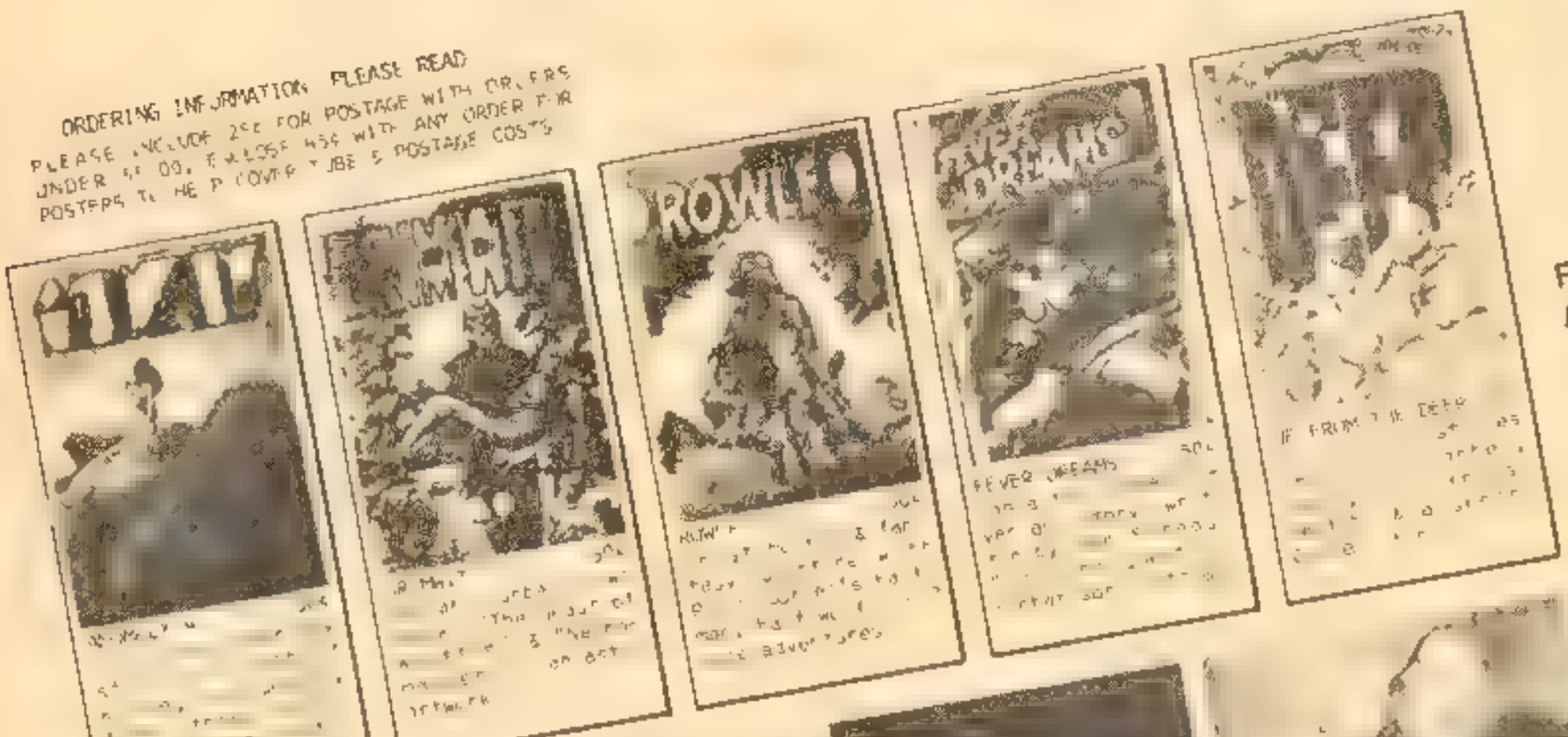

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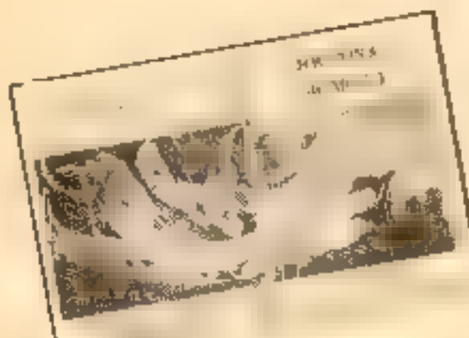

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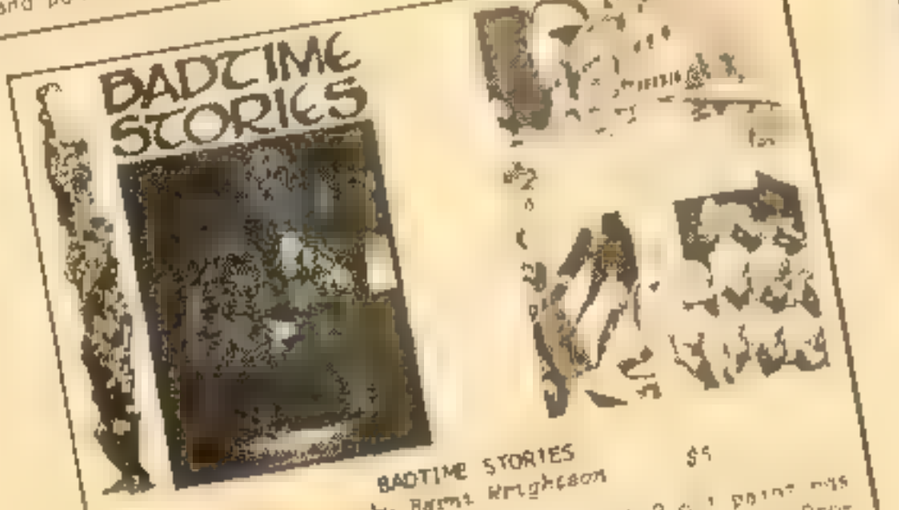

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VIEWPOINTS

Who Owns Original Art?

By Steve Ditko

[Editor's note]—Steve Ditko is one of the industry's most respected artists. He's also one of the most outspoken.

After reading the first issue of INSIDE COMICS, Steve wrote down his opinions concerning the ownership of original art. Steve isn't a writer by trade, but after several attempted re-writes satisfied neither Steve nor INSIDE COMICS' editors, we decided to publish Steve's comments verbatim, except for grammatical changes.

"Who owns original comic art?" is a misleading question.

A clearer question might be "Who has the right to possess, use and dispose of a product that is the result of a division of labor?"

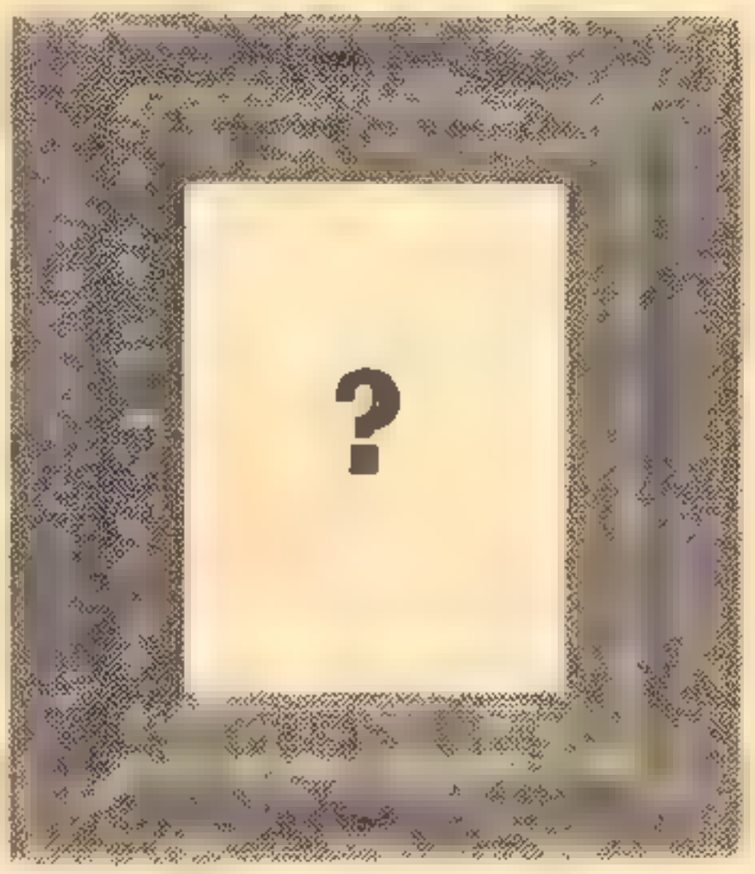
It has been said that 1) the company owns the original page; 2) the artist owns the original page; and, 3) there is uncertainty as to who owns the page because there is no way to determine the page's ownership. The issue requires an understanding of the concepts of ownership, original art, creator, trade and a division of labor.

To talk about ownership—who has the right to what, who actually owns what -is to talk about rights. More specifically, property rights; i.e., the right to take actions (without initiating fraud or force) to acquire a property.

A person acquires and owns property through his actions and by the fact that no one else has a valid claim to the property. If ownership is to have any meaning at all, it must mean the owner is free to use and dispose of his property without anyone else's consent or interference. What an owner does to his property—be it an original art page or a comic book—is no one else's business. It is hard to understand the assertion that even though a company pays a writer, pays a penciller, pays a letterer and pays an inker, he still **cannot** own the art page; but that an artist, who has been paid, yet has paid no one, **does** own the art page.

In taking actions to acquire and own property, one has to make a trade agreement by mutual consent.

Trade, in the context of comics, means the artist and the company are free to go their own way (neither one has a claim on the other party) or to mutually agree to deal and make an exchange for mutual benefit. Under what conditions each will agree to trade (what each gets and what each gives) depends, as with all trades,



on the rationality of the parties involved. "Just" conditions are not automatically known or guaranteed. Honest [illegible] are possible and dishonesties [illegible] be practiced. The artist trades his services for the company's money and benefits. The artist assists in producing a comic page for the company.

In comics, an artist doing the original art is **not** synonymous with being the creator of the comic art page. Being a "creative" artist does not automatically mean he is the page's "creator." The question is not "Who is the originator or creator of the drawing?" The question is "Who is the creator of the **whole** page?"

And who is the creator of the complete comic page? Who brings the page into being? The company is the first cause. It provides the opportunity for the existence of the comic page and creates a need for comic artists, writers and letterers. The writer's story is the secondary cause of comic art. In addition, "original" comic art [illegible] the artist's **interpretation** of another's idea, story or character. Even if it is called a "creative" or "original" interpretation, it is not the same as being the **creator** of the complete comic art page.

If an artist originates his own character, writes his own story and draws it, then he can claim to be the creator and claim ownership. As a form of proof, he can copyright his art page.

But, if an artist works for someone else (on someone else's idea, character, story line or break down) no matter how much he contributes, he is part of a division of labor. As such, he can only make claim to that which he actually produced—and is only entitled to payment, not payment **and** total ownership of the comic page. A company can return the art freely, or as part of the payment in a trade agreement. But a division of labor or a non-creator role does not justify any artist's claim to creating and owning the complete comic art page.

A division of labor is a process by which a number of people sell their special skills to make a finished product. In the context of comics, this means that the company, their character properties, the editor, writer, artists, letterer and others are included in producing a complete comic page.

Who owns the end product produced by that division of labor?

Is it who was paid and only worked on part of it? Or is it who made it all possible and paid for all of it? If the artist has a right to his part of the trade—and owns the money he received in payment—then the company has the right to its part of the trade and owns the art page. (Remember the issue is ownership, the result of a trade made through mutual consent. The issue is not what is a fair trade!)

It is also an error to speak about derivative effects while ignoring the primary causes. It is the forming of a company (the cause)—the bringing together a number of differently skilled people—that creates a new product, a comic page, a comic book and a comic industry (four effects). This is not to say that any comic company today is an admirable model. But it is the **idea** of a company (and its formation) that makes possible an art page with a "reproductive value."

And if there is any value in a division of labor product (the art page) beyond its reproductive value, any artist's claim to ownership of that page (and its value) is a claim to a value beyond his contribution to the page. How can an artist not only claim to still own what another has paid him for, but also claim he owns what others have contributed? How can an artist claim to sell only reproductive rights to an art page containing other people's ideas, story line, characters, efforts and contributions? How can he sell what he hasn't created or hasn't bought or hasn't paid others for? How are his services, however important, a right to claim sole ownership while denying rights and ownership to others?

The issue of ownership is not psychological, but moral and legal. It cannot be understood or settled by what makes one feel good, it can only be resolved by knowledge of what is right. Property ownership is not what one wants or claims it to be. It may even be true, but irrelevant to the issue, that a property owner is not worthy of his acquired property. When the company makes it all possible, has taken all the necessary actions, has traded and paid for it, how could the company be less than the rightful owner of the comic art page?

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For Sale: Max Fleischer's first Popeye cartoon "Popeye the Sailor" (1933) with Betty Boop, excellent quality, 16mm, $20. Ron Hall, 1935 Bryant Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55403.

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Complete Fantastic Four, Spiderman, Conan, JLA, GL-GA, plus hundreds of other titles from past 15 years. Interested? Write: Jay Jacey, Box 672, Paoli, PA 19301.

Send sase for free list of hundreds of comics for sale to: Mark Zak, 450 Angle Rd., Buffalo, NY 14224.

For sale: Kirby sets: Mini New Gods 1-11, Forever People 1-11, Mr. Miracle 1-11. $12.00 each. Sets only. Dan Morris, 23631 Hartland, Euclid, OH 44123.

Marvels, DC., Dell, Gold Key, Bibs, for sale. Send 20¢ in stamps for lists. Jim Silva, 15 Dudley St., #2, Medford, MA 02155.

[illegible] your price. We sell only at prices you'll pay. Send want list with prices. SASE. Gem Meyer, 1236 34th Street, Des Moines, IA 50311.

Collector Cards for indexing comics. 50 for $1.00, 100 for $1.75, 200 for $3.00. 30¢ postage for 100 cards. Grant Boyd, Room 2, 4728 E. LaSalle St., Phoenix, AZ 85040.

For sale: Marvel Super Hero puzzles: Conan, F.F., Hulk, Silver Surfer. $3.00 each. Marty Suran, 11563 Hayvenhurst, Granada Hills, CA 91344. [illegible] postpaid & you must enclose sase on all orders.

DC comic for sale. For list send sase to: Carl Randolph, Star Rt., East, Locust Grove, OK 74352.

Do you want fairly recent DCs and Marvels? Then send a sase to: George Guay III, 13 Harrison Ave., Peabody, MA 01960 for my mini-listalogue. Long the Legion!

Frank Simonetti, 375 Norvell, [illegible]more, TX 77707. Fantastic Auction #1 Reprints, Record mint #6 (to present). Some covers torn, skinned, stamped or penciled. Fair to most mint. One package.

Caveat Emptor, 110 S. Indiana, Bloomington, IN 47401. We sell new, used, rare books and comic books. Search service available for out-of-print books. Also, record and music store.

Comix sale. Entire collection. Hundreds of Marvels, DC. Wide select on titles. Priced my cost plus postage. Send sase for complete list. Charles Casner, 65 Center St., Pompton Lakes, NJ 07442.

Selling Marvel and DC comics. Complete collections of Hulk, Sub Mariner, etc. For sale. All very good mint condition. Send sase for list. Dennis Hahn, 3954 Victory Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44111.

Selling recent Marvels (and some DCs) at 10¢ a copy. Collection limited so list plenty alternatives. Enclose 50¢ postage with orders under $5.00. Eric Jorgensen, M0530 Jaster, Austin, TX 78784.

For sale: Nick Fury, Agent of Shield, June No. 1, Volume 1. Good condition, nice cover by Jim Steranko, Marvel Comics. John Pozzo, 34 McKinley Ave., Bot., CT 06606.

3-Mil Comic Bags—100 for $2.75(U.S.), $3.50(Canada). 1000 for $19.00(U.S.), $24.75(Canada). Investors Corporation of America, Avery B. Klein, President, 3366 Chaillant Road, Shaker Heights, OH 44120.

Send sase for free list. Comics, original art, cartoonists interviewed on tape. Dark Shadows tapes, $10 per hour. Rick Lynn, author, illustrator and cartoonist, [illegible] main, 7 Trace Road, Lagro, IN 46941.

[illegible] Old [illegible] and many comics. Cassette, reel to reel for list write: Paul Russak, 1520 Ryder [illegible]

[illegible] Carrol Ave., San Francisco, CA 94124.

Drop into Book and Things, 21836 Norwalk Blvd., Hawaiian Gardens, CA. Lots of friendly people. Back issues of comics, magazines, paperbacks and stuff.

You want comics? We got comics! Marvels, DCs, etc. Send your wants for a quick reply. Collectors, 88-24 54 Ave., Elmhurst, NY 11373.

For sale: Back issues of Marvel comics and Monster comics. Jerry Wolf, 410 McKee St., Starkville, MS 39759.

Wanted: Old and new Marvel comics. Will pay reasonable prices. Send lists of comics and prices to: Lee Greenstein, 348 E. 51st St., Bklyn, NY 11203.

Wanted: Any information (pictures, articles, etc.) on Superman TV show, Dead End Kids, East Side Kids & Bowery Boys. Danny Fuchs, 38-15 149th Street, Flushing, NY 11354.

Wanted: Highest price paid for [illegible] Wanted: Old copies of Mad Magazine. Send offers to: Scott Forestor, 855 Marion High and Park, [illegible] 60015.

Golden Age radio classic broadcasts of The Shadow, Suspense, Tom Corbett [illegible] comics very good to mint or sale. Adventure, Batman, [illegible] Cavalcade, etc. Send an sase for free list. Jonathan Thunder, [illegible] Springbrook, NY 14140.

TMT #7 for sale cheap! Fair condition. Send offer to Vince, 143 Commodore Drive, Norfolk, VA 23503.

Daredevil, Spiderman, Fantastic Four and others. Watch for sale of important 1960s issues. Prepare want lists now. [illegible] Bristol, CT 06010.

PUBLICATIONS

[illegible] comics form. Author-autographed copies available. Send $6.50 to: J. McQuade, 5111½ N. Sycamore Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90036.

Now Available! Worse Things Waiting, 28 fantasy tales by Manly Wade Wellman, over 30 new illustrations by Lee Brown Coye, cloth, 352 pages, $9.50. Two of the great names from WEIRD TALES together again! Long announced by Arkham House, deluxe limited first edition now published by Carcosa. Box 1064, Chapel Hill, NC 27514.

Have you seen STAR*REACH #1? Jim Starlin ... Howie Chaykin ... Mike Friedrich & Dick Giordano! 48 pages of art for just 75¢! Order your copy from STAR*REACH PUBLICATIONS, 25325 Windfield Rd., Hayward, CA 94541 for 75¢ plus 15¢ postage and handling. Please state your age (you must be 18 to order).

[illegible] oilbound "Song of Bernadette" by Hal Foster $5.95 plus 50¢ postage and handling. Hooka Publications, 935 S. 26th St., Harrisburg, PA 17104.

Caleidoskope's special Ray Harryhausen issue $3.50. We have our own special Ray Harryhausen Club also—for further info, send stamped, self-addressed envelopes to Caleidoskope, Box 412, Cooper Bla., N.Y. 10003. A special Bruce Lee Club-forecast issue in his memory, $4.50 for non-club members. Subscriptions to Caleidoskope's forecast issues are $7.00 per year for non-members. News on various American Asian film personalities and some martial artists are covered among other things.

WANTED TO BUY

The prisoner! Any fans or fanzines out there? Write: Wanda Nati[illegible] man, etc. Will buy or trade for [illegible] of Nimoy. Eric Jensen, Box 542, Waterville, NY 14895.

Am interested in S.F., E.C.'s. Kindly send price list to: M. Anderson, 147 Rolling Green, Amherst, MA 01002.

[illegible] Marvel comics. [illegible] X-Men, Captain America, Thor, Shield. Send list to: Zach Solomon, 28 Murray Blvd., Charleston, SC 29401.

[illegible] Wanted: Spidey's 85, 98-100, 106. Anything to do with Marvelmania or M.M.M.s. Send lists and how much wanted for them to: Fred Wienke, 7 W. Fairchild, Danville, IL 61832.

Wanted: Any Kamandi, Savage Tales, Weird Worlds, Shazam, Sword of Sorcery, Tarzan, Swamp Thing, Conan, Demon. Mint Condition. Send price list to: Victor Logvinov, 8017 Kimbrel La., Huntsville, AL 35810.

Original artwork for sale. Buscema, Reese, Wood, Kirby and more. Will also buy and trade for original artwork. Send sase for list. Joe Shoemaker, 12 Wakeman Rd., Fa[illegible]

[illegible] and 39. Yellow Dog 14 to 16. Degas 2. For Sale: Plans for comic collectors bookcase. $1.00. William Ingram, Box 232 MPO, Dayton, OH 45401.

We're looking for reg[illegible] quality distributed and [illegible] underground comics [illegible] Clark Banks artwork and [illegible] material. Scott Shaw and Jose Mackenzie, 4579 34th St., San Diego, CA 92116.

Wanted: Comics with Carl Barks artwork. Pogo sa[illegible] towers & back issues of Funnyworld & Graphic Story Magazine. Send your [illegible] prices to: Bi[illegible]man, 99 Ward St., Newmarket, Ont.

Wanted to Buy: Mint E.C.'s and quantity purchases of certain comic[illegible] Please contact: Bob [illegible] Pietro, 452B River Rd., Nutley, NJ 07[illegible]0.

I'd like to buy jungle comics of any kind. Supergirl, The Cat, Submariner 54-63, 65-70, Capt. America 110, 161-70. T[illegible] Kuper, 59 Park Dr., Kenilworth, NJ 0[illegible]

Wanted: Thunder Agents, Norman Dynamo. Also DC Golden Age. More E[illegible] Flash, comic Cavalcade, Wonder Woman. Send xerox & price to: Tom Rader, 78 Wilborn Ave., Gilroy, CA 95020.

Buying Conan issue 1. And all original Black Night Comics. Buying in quantity. Will pay up to $3.00 for any in VG to MINT. Please send [illegible] Hans Schumacher, 4933 N. Oakley, Chicago, IL 60625.

Buyer for Golden Age Submariners. $50 maximum. Must be in good condition or better. Send description to: Steve Adams, 7844 Shady Hills Drive West, Indianapolis, IN 46278. All letters answered.

Wanted: Out of print and rare underground comix and tabloids, i.e., Gothic Blimp, Tales from Ozone, Yellow Dog, etc. Top dollar paid! Rich Caravan, 46 Merton, Lynbrook, NY 11563.

[illegible] needs supplier of certain [illegible] & forthcoming DC [illegible] Write for [illegible] & prices. Gary Arbuckle, 521 Queen St., Newmarket, Ont., Canada.

Wanted: Silver Surfer and Mister Miracle comics also any Demon comic books. Will buy comics in good to near mint condition. Brian Sheridan, 27 Ogden Road, Stamford, CT 06906.

Wanted: DC Super Hero comic books. Please send list and prices. Billy Alger, 1500 Torrey Drive, Huntsville, AL 35802.

Will pay $5.00 for very fine to mint Savage Tales #1. Rick Winters, 208 Olive Ave., Poteau, OK 74953.

American interested buyer of all pre-'67 Marvels. Selling, please contact: Michael Bratton, 111 E. 4th, Williamsport, PA 17[illegible]

I am interested in any old issues of Green Lantern. If you have any you wish to sell, please contact me. C.B. Horsford, 2205 Seventh St., Charlottesville, VA 22901.

Need cash for comics? I will buy your old toy cars and trucks by Matchbox, Dinky, etc. Also 1/25 scale dealer promotional cars. Jeff Herman, 619 Atwood, Rochester, MI 48063.

Paying top prices for giclis [illegible] Barrett, Yvonne Craig, Land of Giants, Heather Young, Diana Rig. Send descriptions, rough tracings. Alan Walker, 184 MacPherson Ave., Toronto, Ont. M5R 1W9.

Wanted: Elvis memorabilia—records, [illegible] posters, pictures, press books, [illegible] records, etc. Just about anything. Send complete description and [illegible] to: Ed Popoff, 664 Comstock Dr., Richmond, B.C., Canada.

Wanted: DC, Marvel comics 1960s up. Will pay from 5¢ to 25¢ ea. depending on age and condition. Send sase or [illegible]'s. Charles Lawrence, WSA #550, Box 27, Fairmont, NC 28327.

Wanted: Original art from pulps, science fiction mags. Also art by Cartier, Frees, EMSH, Al Feldstein, others. Will pay top price, write. Ronald Scalfidi, 345 Montgomery St., Bklyn, NY 11225.

Wanted: one copy of Stormbringer, hardback, mint condition. Contact: David Hawkhurst, Box 95, Harriman, NY 10926.

Wanted: photographs, articles, etc. on Raquel Welch. Send information, prices to: Rob Stanley, 2421 Milan Rd., Sandusky, OH 44870.

Wanted: Deadman, Metamorpho, Metal Men, Spectre, Comics & [illegible] stuff regarding magazines, posters, etc. Send lists to: [illegible] Casinos, 37 Hastings Rd., Kenilworth, NJ 08824.

Wanted: pulps in good condition. The Shadow, Spider, G-8, Operator 5, Doc Savage. Send your lists. William Thom, 1120 Parkleigh Dr., Parma, OH 44134.

Wanted: mint-nmint Detective 417, Action 419, Weird Worlds 8, all Shanna the She-Devils. Best offer (cover prices?). Chas Meyerson, 8541, Hillcrest, Orland Park, IL 60462.

Wanted: Posters, lobby cards, pressbooks of science fiction and horror films from the 30s to the 50s. Will pay reasonable prices. Send lists to: Bruce Tinkel, 79-27 262 St., Floral Park, N.Y. 11004.

Wanted: Fantastic Four and Captain America back issues. Will pay good price. Call (914) 725-5005 or write Allen Chao, 23 Greenville Rd., Scarsdale, NY 10583.

Wanted: Doc Savage pulps. Send list to: Dunlap, 1606 Elkhart, Apt. 26, Lubbock, TX 79416.

Wanted: Krazy Kat and George Herriman letters, artwork, personal documents, and memorabilia for biography. Wish to borrow or buy. Contact: M. Thomas Inge, 8624 Waxford Road, Richmond, VA 23235.

Marvel Comics from the 60s. Send your price lists to Ethan Kass, 80-12 149 Ave., Howard Beach, NY 11414.

Wanted: Doc Savage Bantam books and J.R.R. Tolkien material. Jim Bennett, 842 Hunt St., Akron, OH 44306.

Wanted: Classics Illus. #s 14-$20; 20,33,43-$15; 115-$10; 157-$5. Prices are for near-mint first editions, less otherwise. Dennis Kiebe, 1711 N. Nevada St., Carson City, NV 89701.

Wanted: Comics, EC, old Captain Marvels, Marvels DC. Send price list to: Billy Flink, 3 Holly Circle, Monsey, NY 10952.

Wanted: Spirit Sections 1947-50. Top prices paid. Steven Grant, 623 State St., Apt. 3, Madison, WI 53703.

Buying original art—Adams, Wrightson, Fine, Kaluta, Davis, Ingels, Raymong, McKay, Nino, Hogarth. Highest prices paid. C. Zavisa, 14164 W. Outer Drive, Detroit, MI 48239.

Wanted: DC Comics from 1940 to 1959. Will pay reasonable price. Send list with prices and SASE to: Lori Medgovich, 3836 W. Glendale Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85021.

Spirit sections wanted! Paying for all sections, Fine-Mint (No rips, heavy browning). $3.25 each for 1940-1941, $2.00 each from 1943-52. Marc Emery, 27 Parliament, London, Ontario, Canada.

Wanted: Any Sp, erman, Fantastic Four, Warren Magazines, Menomonee Falls Gazette. Send list and condition - Bid or Sale - Lot or single copy. Ed Jarosz, 54 Birch St., Bloomfield, NJ 07003.

I'll pay $25 for a copy of A. Raymond's Flash Gordon pulp mag (circa 1936) in very good condition. Resnick, Rt. 1, Box 25, Libertyville, IL 60048.

Shadow material needed. Grossman, Box 451, Woodland Hills, CA 91364.

I buy original comic book art. Send your lists to Harley Anton, c/o History Department, L.S.U., Baton Rouge, LA 70803.

Wanted: On Stage and Apt. 3-G dailies and Sundays 1964-68, Williamsons Corrigan dailies 1968-71. Send list of dates and prices. John Musker, 4917 Opal Ave., Chicago, IL 60656.

I am interested in buying old Marvel comics of the sixty's. Write to: Mike Saler, 393 Main St., Concord, MA 01742.

Wanted: Comics with artwork by Frazetta, Kirby, Swan and Klein, Steranko, Ditko. Will pay cash or trade. Write me what you have. Tom Satchell, 2655 N.W. Robinia, Portland, OR 97229.

Wanted: Dick Tracy comic strips from January 1st 1960 to present. Also Ripleys Believe It or Not! strips, any date. Contact: Jeff Killian, 2352 Osage, Wichita, KS 67213.

Wanted: Cartoonist profiles 1,2,4,5, 7-9,13; Judith O'Sullivan's Art of Comic Strip (U. of Maryland 1971). Bill Crouch Jr., 320 Beechwood Ave., Bridgeport, CT 06604.

Wanted: Will pay top prices All Star #1, 8,10,11,13,15,16,41,45,48. Write to: Murray Ward, 1190 Alfred Ave., Winnipeg, Man., Canada.

Wanted to buy: Old Marvel comics and EC comics. Jim Friedheim, Box 743 Allegheny College, Meadville, PA 16335.

Wanted: back issues of the Silver Surfer in mint condition. Will pay top dollar. Write to Frank Gargano, 300 Delavan Ave., Newark, NJ 07104.

Comic wanted! Arrow #3. Will pay good price. Write Ron Lufaro, 147-37 Roosevelt Ave., Flushing, NY 11354.

Wanted: Comic Crusader 5-11, MFG 18-19, Spiderman 1-3, Avengers 2-4, Early Superman and Batman and Annuals. Greg Gibbons, 718 Somerset, Saginaw, MI 48603.

I'm interested in buying early SF books by these authors: Anderson, Carter, Fox, Jakes, Moorcock, Santesson. Send price lists, not any books. Ronald Spitzer, 610 N. Bedford, Tucson, AZ 85710.

Wanted: Marvel and DC comics, House of Mystery special, Savage Tales and other Marvel magazines. Send list and prices. Patrick McArdle, 2821 Friendship, Iowa City, IA 52240.

Wanted: the February 1973 issue of National Geographic. Will pay $3-4 for a copy in good condition. Jerry Collins, 5 Green Dr., Concord, NC 28025.

Wanted: old or new Atlas, D.C. or Marvel Comics. Send list and I'll correspond with prices. David Wieters, 115 West St., Galena, IL 61036.

Want to buy Marvel Comix and correspond with S.F., comix and Star Trek fans. Box Gillian, 2538 Augustine Dr., Parma, OH 44134.

Old comics for sale. For list send 25¢ to: Jack Carty, Jr. 30-08 45th St., L.I.C., N.Y. 11103.

I want to buy: HOUSE OF SECRETS #92, Showcase #80, The Fly (Radio Comics) #1 & #4. VG-M. Send prices to: G. Whetzel, 133 N. Main, Sharon, PA 16146.

Wanted: J.L.A. 73 and 74, most Teen Titan issues, plus older D.C. & Marvel comics. Very good prices or trades. Write to: Dale Cendal, 37 Crest Dr., White Plains, NY 10607.

Interested in Marvel, Timely and Atlas comics; pulp magazines, Doc Savage, Spider, Shadow, etc.; and back issues of Monster Times. Send prices to L. Oliver, 11798 Hazeldell, Riverside, CA 92505.

Wanted: Monster Times #7 & 8. Must be in good condition. Send prices. Ted Davis, 2068 Stoneybrook Dr., Tucker, GA 30084.

Wanted: back issues of Conan, Avengers and Spiderman. Send list and prices to: John McDonald, 101 Cedar Drive, Uniontown, Pa. 15401.

Wanted: horror, science fiction, suspense, war humor EC comics. Condition doesn't matter but must be complete and readable. Send lists to: Tim Lynch, 30 Scott Drive, S. Windsor, CT 06074.

Want to buy: coverless copy Superman #28 with C.F. intact. Five bucks. Write first. Tom Bowden, 544 S. Grove, Oak Park, IL 60304. Also buy other old Superman comics.

Wanted: old Spiderman, Avengers, Fantastic Four comics. Send selling list to: Ed A. Olnes, 3013 S. First Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 57105.

Wanted: Supersnipe and Big Shot Comics and Red Barry Sunday strips by Will Gould. Tom Long, Box 8957, Richmond, VA 23225.

Wanted: Any material on Lost in Space or The Starlost. Also fanzines or comics about Justice Society or Legion of Super-Heroes. Brian Coan, 3305 Kenmore, Shaker Hts., OH 44122.

I need Conan 11, 13, 14, Spiderman 1 thru 38, Annuals 1 and 2. Strange Tales and Shield. Duane Henson, 716 S. Minn. St., Redwood Falls, MN 56283.

Wanted: Cheap Mads, Justice Leagues and Brave & Bolds. Send lists & prices. Paul Cool 736 Paopua Lp. Kailua, HA 96734.

I want both D.C. & Marvel comics, old & new, send lists to: Tom Smith, 42 Red Bank Road, Spotswood, NJ 08884.

Wanted: Shadow and Green Hornet comics from the 1940's. Barry Lasky, 943 Ninth St., Apt. #6, Santa Monica, CA 90403.

Wanted: Fantagor and other materials (comix, etc.) by Richard Corben. Send lists to: Lee Whitley, Box 493, Greenville, FL 32331.

Wanted: Back number Marvel and National comics. Must be in good condition with reasonable prices. Send list and prices to Michael Kimmel, Bronx, NY 10469.

Old RCA Victor recordings of the Blackwood Bros. Quartet. Send a list of what you will sell to John Wray, 720 S. 19th St., Terre Haute, IN 47803.

Wanted: All Star 1-4, 7, 8; in very good or better. Will pay Overstreet prices. Barry Gardner, 710 Arrowhead Circle, Garland, TX 75041.

Am interested in buying copies of Blackhawk, Military and Modern Comics. I also am buying many DCs and Marvels. Send lists to: Dan McQuain, 8410 Victory Lane, Potomac, MD 20854.

Wanted: Doc Savage paperbacks #7, 10, 19, 22. Belmont Shadow paperbacks. Mint condition. Selling Star Trek episodes on cassettes. Send SASE for information. David Donovan, 1704 Terrace, Carroll, IA 51401.

Wanted: Marvel and Timely comics. Send me a list of what you have listing condition and price. Low prices please. Chris Pantazonis, 2830 Grand Concourse, Bronx, NY 10458.

Wish to buy Savage Tales #1, Conan #1, Kull #1, Monsters Unleashed #3. Send price requests to Henry Salvione, 281 Sharpe Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10302.

Buying full-length movie sound tracks on tape. Info to Art Barnett, P.O. Box 18784, Lenox Sta., Atlanta, GA 30326.

Wanted: All checklists, articles, biographical data on comic book pros for Who's Who of American Comic Books. Help will be rewarded. Contact: Jerry Balls, 487 Lakewood, Detroit, MI 48215. Thanks.

Wanted: Old daily and Sunday comic sections. Also want Spirit sections. Have Flash Gordon original art, and other items to trade. Marlin Kircher Jr., 6000 Hillen Rd., Balto., MD 21239.

Interested in buying comics, esp. Golden age, National, Marvel, Timely. Send your list to: Brian Hayes, 3764 Oleander, Chicago, IL 60634. I'd like Showcase, Brave & Bold, Justice League.

Wanted: Hulk No. 1. Mint to near mint $20.00. Write first. Bill Lear, 4522 N. 53rd Lane, Phoenix, AZ 85031.

Buying books, articles, criticisms, etc. by and about Moorcock. Send a list of prices and condition of what you have to: Don Yee, 22 Hudson Pl., Hoboken, NJ 07030.

Comic books wanted before 1955. Also newspaper weekend comic sections and daily comic pages. Top prices for large or small collections. Calvin Slobodian, Box 550, Rivers, Manitoba, Canada.

Wanted: Tomb of Dracula #1,2,3. Will pay $3.00 for all three. Must be in NM-M condition. Dave Mitchell, 1232 Belleview Ave., Roanoke, VA 24014.

Wanted for personal collection FF 1-5, Spidy 2,3, Hulk 1. Paying 100% mint Overstreet. For Fine or better. Write: John Ehrmann, 1178 S. 2nd, Waco, TX 76706.

Wanted! Covers: Spy Smasher #1; All-Star #8; World's Finest with centerfolds Missing: All-Star #15; Flash #104. Dave Smith, 5828 Vandegrift Ave., Rockville, MD 20851. (301) 770-0697.

Frazetta fan will purchase comics, magazines, paperback books, with Frazetta covers. Drop me a line with what you have. Corky Feigenheimer, 807 Rosewood, Winnetka, IL 60003.

Wanted: Advanced information on cons and fanzines. Send to: Michael Cascio, 12 Coronet Rd., Yonkers, NY 10710.

Wanted: The Howard Collector #1—#8, #10—#14. Also: Pulp #1, #2, #3. Mike Coffee, Rd. 1, Cambridge, OH 43725.

Wanted: Mystery in Space 1, 2, 3, 7, 10. Forbidden Worlds 35, 37, 58, 67. Also late 1950s Mad Imitations. Bob Reed, 6991 E. 56th Ave., Commerce City, CO 80022.

Wanted: Power House Pepper #2-6, Two Fisted Tales #22, #25. Pre 1968 BC Sunday & Daily strips. All must be V.G. or better. Monte Beauchamp, 1932-23 St., Moline, IL 61265.

Wanted: Disney comics! Will pay good prices for old and recent Disneys in V.G. or better condition. Send price list to: Andrew Cunningham, 35 Newcomb Rd., Tenafly, NJ 07670.

Wanted: MLJ/Archie Comics pre '59. Will trade or buy. Many DC/Marvel for sale. Send wants to: John Iavarone, 7 Glendale Ave., Albany, NY 12208.

Wanted: Fantastic Four #1, Avengers #1, Spider-Man #1, Hulk #1, Amazing Fantasy #1. Must be in mint condition. Write Larry Brill, The Monster Times, 11 West 17 Street, New York, N.Y. 10011.

Wanted: Ghost Rider (ME) and any mag that he appeared in. Send price and condition to John E. Mullen, 2874 Pine Place, St. Louis, Mo. 63103.

Wanted: Any Neal Adams original artwork. Also Doc Savage pulps December 1938 and summer 1940. I'm sure we can work something out. Write! Chris Hansen, 721 Ravinewoods, Peoria, IL 61614.

Wanted: TV Guides, July 1972 to present, from Baltimore-Washington, D.C. Write to Alan Frugis, 27 Suburbia Court, Jersey City, N.J. 07305. Please enclose a S.S.A.E.

Wanted to Buy: DC and Marvel comics, Mad, Natl. Lampoon, TV Guide, Pop Science, etc. Send list to: David Klein, 73 East Warren Rd., Custer City, PA 16725.

Roy Thomas—Paper's scarce! Stop filling it up with trash! Make every page count—Less production, more quality—Please!

Disney collector will pay from $75 to $250 for Donald Duck or Mickey Mouse one sheets I don't have. Also collect original art. Bruce Hamilton, Box 998, Scottsdale, AZ 85252.

Wanted: Conan the Barbarian comic books or posters etc. Send price list to: Joe Gajdek, 102 Camden Rd., Parsippany, NJ 07054.

Wanted: Mint copy of Superman novel by George Lowther. Published 1942 by Random House. Send asking price to: Richard J. Peppers, 5330 Zealand St., St. Louis, MO 63107.

Worlds Finest, Sensation comics. Any before 1948 wanted at once. Top dollar paid. Richard Pryor, 105B Quien Sabe, Carmel Valley, CA 93924.

Movie posters. Originals. Reasonable. Horror, James Bond, Planet of Apes, etc. Send for lists. The Movie Gallery, 2491 Merrick Road, Bellmore, NY 11710.

Wanted: Copy of Abyss. Send prices. Hudson Hill, 223 Columbia Dr., #201, Cape Canaveral, FL 32920.

Newspaper daily comic strips and pages from before 1946 wanted—especially cheap odd lots. Buy, sell, trade daily strips. Write Doug Kendig, 15 Strickland, Nanaimo, B.C., V9R 4S1, Canada.

I buy comics in fair or worse condition, even coverless. Early Marvels and Disneys. Send lists with condition & prices, Rod Turner, 5686 E. Bloomfield, Simi Valley, CA 93063.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fanzine Editors: I am interested in contributing articles, reviews, etc. to any fanzine. Send info to: Gary N. Curtis, 802 S. 4th St., Terre Haut, IN 47807.

Come to Nova III. The Pacific Northwest's biggest and best comic and nostalgia con. For info write: Old Weird Herald's, 6804 N.E. Broadway, Portland, OR.

Pen pal wanted. I am single 28 long hair. Write to Mik Copas, 131½ Grady Ave., Athens, GA 30601. Smokey Stover lives.

Steve Solomon, 10 Arboro Drive, Sharon, MA 02067. I would like info on whatever you are selling, comics, posters, fanzines, etc. (Congrats to T.M.T.—Inside Comics was long needed.)

STOP! Buying, selling, and trading comics and related items. Send an sase for my FREE buying and selling lists soon. Write to: Russell Condello, 34 Burt Street, Rochester, NY 14609.

Interested in starting a Midwest Comic Collector Association? Write to T.L. Reed, 1211½ Powers, New Haven, IN 46774.

New collector of comix welcomes all sellers lists with prices. Please send your lists to: Wilbur Shipp, 9725 King George Dr., Manassas, VA 22110.

Attention fans in Eastern Penna. area. Send me your name, address, phone no. for future meeting in Allentown area. Send to Paul Stadinger, 239 N. 9th St., Allentown, PA 18102.

Attention Marvelites! If you're not satisfied with Marvel as it is—Join the Skylark Society! Send a sase for more information to: J. Black, 1550A Everett St., Alameda, CA 94501.

Looking for talented writers and artists for new line of quality fanzine comix and pulp-style publications. If interested, write: Doug Hawk, 5322 Atchison Way, Denver, CO 80239.

Put me on your mailing lists. I collect almost everything including magazines, records and cassettes. Richard O'Neill, 9816 Oakley, Chicago, IL 60643.

Shirley: Although we may never be more than friends, you have always fascinated me and will most likely continue to. Love, The Lone Ranger.

Wanted: Comic fans interested in corresponding about and trading or selling comics. Write: Chuck Hines, 120 N. Cavender St., Hobard, IN 46342.

Notre Dame/South Bend—would like to rap with comic & sci-fi fans in the area. Also interested in music composer Jimmy Webb. Gary Povlin, 2480 Bow Court, South Bend, IN 46628.

The truth of potatoes is whiter than your eye is longer than a lifetime of walking between here and the supermarket that never stops to wipe its brow. D. Lewis.

Do you want to kick the habit? Don't O.D. on Berkeley, San Francisco or San Jose. Comix Shops. Come to the Top of the Main. Shazam Comix in Walnut Creek.

Wish to meet young ladies 18+ interested in comics, bridge, music in Cleveland area. Jim, 1891 Lee Rd., Cleveland Hts., OH 44118.

Being restricted I collect stamps of the world. Please send me any duplicates you might have and could part with. Gerald Gettel, Villard, MN 56385.

Am desperate to contact with male or female Shadow comix & radio fan. Jose Figueroa, 562 Franklin Ave., Franklin Lakes, NJ 07417. Should also like other radio shows.

Back Inside Comix, TBG, and the Marianna Muck Monster. George Sakel.

Anyone with information about The Shadow please contact: Francis J. Winship, RD #1, Fayette City, PA 15438.

Want to contact any comic book collectors in Atlanta. Write T. Marsh, Box 35381, Atlanta, GA 30332 or phone 894-5702.

Wanted: Material by and about: Bode, Steranko, Ken Smith, Frazetta, and any and all fan/pro-zines. Write to: Brad Foster, 202 Oakleaf, San Antonio, TX 78209.

I'm a cynic, I think comics are dead. Anyone with any ideas what fans can do about it write me. Bruce Canter, 244 Vine St., Everett, MA 02149.

To anybody who knows anything about horror make-up, send info to: Roy Griffis, 4220 San Pedro, Tampa, FL 33608.

Wanted: Pen pals who are fans of the Shadow, Conan, Kull, Frazetta, Maroto, EC and Marvel Comic books. Send letters to: David Church, 3313 Meadowbrook Dr., Lancaster, OH 43130.

For sale: Used pen points, given to pros by fans. Hundreds available. Write: Billy Batson, c/o Whipple's Boarding House, 8402 Holy Moley Blvd., Vesik Village, Shazam Island.

Anything: Send me any lists or catalogs of books, comics, esp. EC's, fanzines, movie pubs, films. Bruce Francis, 11502 Alma St., Silver Spring, MD 20902.

Buying and trading anyone in Chicago and outlying suburban area willing to sell or trade comics, fanzines, etc. Please contact Kevin Smith, 211 Home Ave., Itasca, IL 60143. Telephone 773-9598.

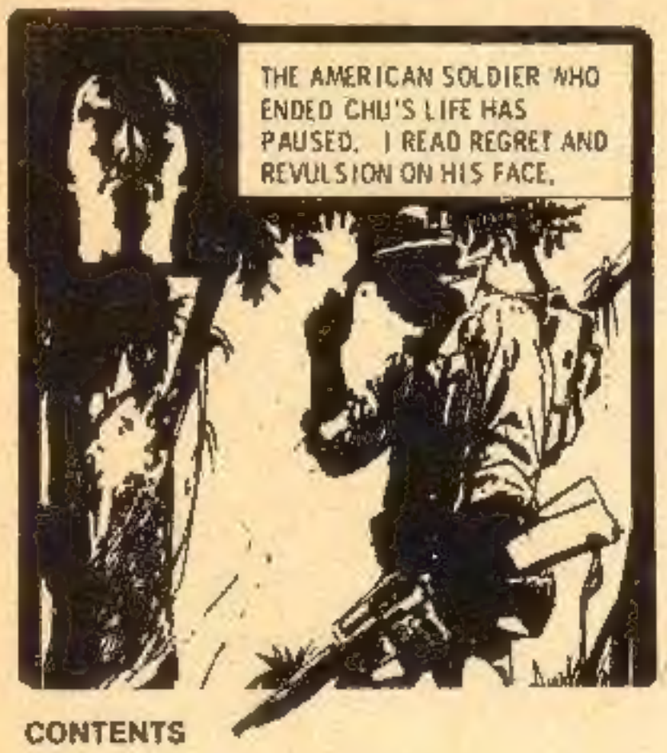
Residents of Atlanta, Ga.: I am interested in buying, selling, trading, and just getting together about comics. Contact: Kenneth Riviere, 2707 Lake Erin Dr., Tucker, GA 30084.

Vote in the 1974 Graphic Magazine Fan Awards! Ballots available from Lester Boutillier, 2726 Castiglione St., New Orleans, LA 70119.

"Blasphemous!" says Canadian Financial Institutions Today ... and you will too, when you hear Raoul Duke and his All-Human Orchestra's "Mondo Musicalistico" ... Available on Berserk records and tapes.

Have an old coverless Blackhawk. First story, "Master of Mankind." Has no DC emblems. Am sure it's a Quality comic. Could someone please identify it? Rosenblatt, Box 42, Jefferson, OR 97352.

PHASE MAGAZINE



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Impact
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Coming of the Piranhas
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Duel
story: Gerry Conway * art: Gray Morrow

Soul Food
story: Phil Seuling * art: Chris Notarile

Comes the Gray Dawn
story: Marv Wolfman * art: Rich Buckler

Home
story and art: Jeff Jones

Veteran
story: Kathy Barr * art: Ken Barr

Hero
story and art: Bil Maher

Sally's Song
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Getting the Point
story and art: Kenneth Smith

Comic Book Freak
story and art: Tom Sutton

Yesterday's Rain
story and art: Steve Fritz

Dragon Slayer
story: Len Wein * art: Tony De Zuniga

A View from Without
story and art: Neal Adams

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THE LAST WORD

You ever read an editorial by a fanzine editor folding his magazine? Or by a fanzine editor who's about to retire?

They're long, rambling pieces of nothing. The clowns go on for pages without saying a damn thing. He thanks his staff eighty times over—so many times, in fact, even the staff gets bored of being thanked. Or else he spends half the magazine telling people how they can't possibly survive without him or his magazine.

Bullshit. They're always a drag. Or, as Staten Island fan Chuck Spanier once wrote, "Dull, dull, dull, dull, dull, dull."

So, with that off my chest, I can resign without making a big deal of it.

This second issue of **INSIDE COMICS** will be the last issue I edit. In fact, by the time you read this, I'll already be gone. And (lucky for you!) I don't resurrect myself after three issues.

Seriously, though, **INSIDE COMIX** began almost a year ago as a supplement to the major ad fanzines. We were out to provide an alternate to all the crap being dished out in fandom. We were trying to develop into something a fan with anything more than minimal intelligence could find stimulating and entertaining.

With the help of a lot of fine people, we brought about **INSIDE COMICS**, the first professional comic fanzine. And I think we fulfilled our goal. The first issue was a complete sell-out. The response was terrific. We got hundreds of letters of compliments from fans and comic professionals alike. All in all, we were doing a job that was waiting to be done.

At this moment, more people read **INSIDE COMICS** than any other fanzine. We outsell **THE BUYER'S GUIDE** three-to-one. And I like to think we're the most interesting, entertaining and provocative magazine in the field. Not to mention the best source of news.

So now that I've done what I've always wanted to do in comics fandom, I can gently go my own way. I'm going to take a couple of months off to rest an ailing right knee suffering from an acute case of "too much basketball playing." I'm just going to kick around for a couple of months, polish off several free-lance assignments, and generally take it easy.

And then, when I finish kicking around several months from now, I'll go back to newspaper reporting. Which is where I've always belonged anyway.

Meanwhile, back at **INSIDE COMICS**, I'm happy to announce that Ron Barlow has already taken over as editor. I don't think I really have to introduce Ron—after all, he hasn't done much, except edit the Nostalgia Press **EC HORROR LIBRARY** and convene the first EC Fan-Addict Convention. Not to mention being the guy behind that **EC CLASSIC REPRINT SERIES** we've all been drooling over lately.

He brings a vast amoung of experience and quality to **INSIDE COMICS**. We're sure you'll find him an excellent editor.

And, for those of you who still might want to keep in touch with yours truly, just drop a line in care of: Downstairs Mail Forwarders, 167 West 21st Street, New York City 10011. I just love to get mail.

So, without further adieu, let me borrow a line from Snagglepuss and "Exit, stage left."

Cue the sunset. —**Joe Brancatelli**

Roy Thomas
and a mysterious "disease"
on a panel
at the recent New York
Creation Con.

FLASHBACK

Are you tired of seeing super-high prices on the best Golden Age comics, thinking you'll never be able to own even **one**? Well, you probably won't—but now you can have the next best thing: FLASHBACK REPRINTS. We've re-published the **entire comics**, each with a **full color cover** and fine black and white printing inside ... all on good, white paper. We've selected some comics from each of the favorite Golden Age companies, so you're bound to find some rare issues here you've always wanted to own. There's no longer any need to dish out hundred dollar bills to get these great issues!

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#4: SPECIAL COMICS #1 (1942, M.L.J. Magazines)
#5: MILITARY COMICS #1 (1941, Quality Group) One of the finest comics of the Golden Age
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#7: PEP COMICS #1 (1941, M.L.J. Magazines)
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#11: PLASTIC MAN #1 (1942, Quality Comics) All Jack Cole! Very, very nice!
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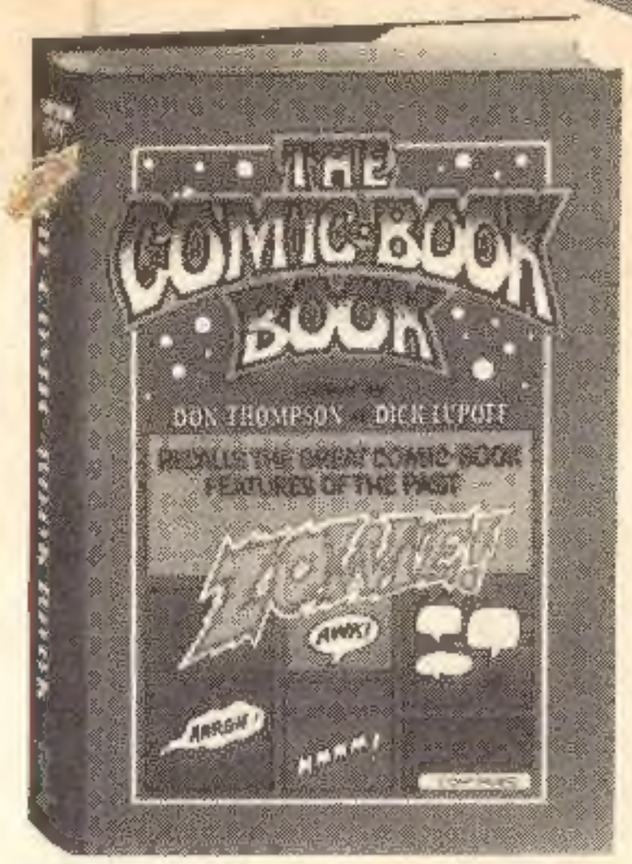
- The first Tarzan story: 95,000 words written in longhand on somebody else's stationery by a 35-year-old pauper
- Plastic Man and Hugh Hefner
- Triumphant researchers unearth a pre-Disney Mickey and Minnie Mouse
- It came from Lafayette Street: the birth of *Mad*
- Comics Code Authority softens its stand against vampires and werewolves, provided they are "used in the classic manner"
- Little Orphan Annie's radio boyfriend: Why Joe Cornstassle was created
- Madam Fatal: here in drag
- Turnabout is fair play. "The Lonely Dungeon" (*Mystery Tales* #18) "proves" that the monster created Dr. Frankenstein
- *New York* Magazine brings back The Spirit
- The schizophrenia of the EC symbol: Education Comics (*Picture Stories from the Bible*) and Entertaining Comics (*Haunt of Fear*, etc.)
- Carl Barks' life at the Disney Studios: "I was just a duck man—strictly a duck man"
- Radio at its best—the opening chant of *Superman*
- Comic book wartime slogan: "Tin Cans in the Garbage Pile Are Just a Way of Saying 'Heil!'"



Well, it wasn't great literature (gasp!), but we all read it. On a lazy summer afternoon, the only sound heard in the land was the flipping of comic-book pages at Pop's soda fountain, or under the old elm tree (remember elms?).

In *The Comic-Book Book*, popular culture historians Dick Lupoff and Don Thompson continue the missionary work they began with the justly acclaimed pioneer volume, *All in Color for a Dime*. Aided by a crew of outrageously knowledgeable comic-book buffs and a batch of carefully chosen illustrations, they evoke the old magic—and also make some penetrating, scholarly, nostalgic and wildly funny remarks on those never-to-be-forgotten pleasures of our innocent youth.

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